UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/261
S/26073
13 July 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-eighth session
Item 115 (c) of the preliminary list*
HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS AND REPORTS OF SPECIAL RAPPORTEURS AND REPRESENTATIVES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 12 July 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a memorandum by the Union of Croat Refugees and Displaced Persons from Vojvodina along with individual statements by Croats who have been mistreated and forced to leave their homes in the province of Vojvodina, which is located in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) (see annex).**

In 1991 and 1992 over 35,000 Croats and about 50,000 Hungarians were driven out or moved from Vojvodina under pressure. The exiled Croats have been forced to leave 67 places in Vojvodina and have settled in the Republic of Croatia while a smaller number have gone to other countries.

The most common reasons for exile have been:

- threats of expulsion and ransacking of homes;
- terror by Serbian nationalist extremist groups, followed by physical harassment;
- forced mobilization;
- dismissal from employment;

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* A/48/50.

** The annex is being circulated in the original language of submission only.

- attacks against private property;

- attacks against cultural and sacral objects.

I would be grateful if you would provide for the distribution of the present letter and its annex as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 115 (c) of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Memorandum issued on 25 August 1992 by the Union of Croat Refugees and Displaced Persons from Voivodina

I

In the province of Voivodina, where 28 different peoples and ethnic groups live (Serbs, Hungarians, Croats, Slovaks, Jews, Ruthenians, Russians, Czechs, Ukrainians, Germans, Rumanians, Poles, Moslems, Albanians, Romany and others) the fundamental human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Charter, Geneva Conventions, the Final Document of CSCE from 1975, the Charter of Paris from 1990. and other relevant international regulations and covenants are being being violated.

II

The Serbian state and military authorities of the former Yugoslav army (JNA) together with Serbian extremists' groups (Chetniks) violate human rights and freedoms especially of national minorities which make more than 46 % of the Province's population. Terror the citizens of Voivodina are exposed to reflects in the following:

a) They are physically and psychologically mistreated, often with grave and lasting consequences.

b) They are being detained in camps (Begejci, Stajićevo, Sremska Mitrovica, Niš, Bubanj Potok, Paragovo...).

c) The authorities force them against their will to go to the war they do not want.

d) They are being forcefully driven out of their homes and places.

e) Their private property, posessions and goods are being plundered.

f) They do not have the freedom to move and convene freely.

g) There is no freedom of public speech, use of language and script, cultivation of the culture and traditions of the people they belong to.

h) Attacks on religious premisses and Catholic priests are constant, the expression and cultivation of religion is undesirable.

i) They do not have the right to confidence of mail, their telephones are being tapped and contacts with their relatives outside the Province prevented.

All this has led to massive exodus of autochtonous (native) population from Voivodina. From June of 1991. until now more than 35.000 Hungarians (according to the official

report by the Hungarian government) and more than 19.000 Croats, as well as a large but still unspecified number of members of other national minorities (Slovaks, Ruthenians, Germans, Moslems, Ukrainians, Albanians and others) have been driven away or fled the violence; those who still remain in Voivodina are exposed to daily tortures and all kinds of pressure. They live in constant fear and under psychological strain.

III

Since the situation is worsening day by day, we direct this appeal to the European and world public, governments and statesmen of countries of the democratic world, to institutions and organizations for the protection of human rights and for humanitarian aid, to URGENTLY stop the terror and violence against the citizens of Voivodina.

IV

We draw attention of all states that have members of their nations in the Province of Voivodina, to do whatever they can to protect them, their property and goods.

V

We especially appeal to the EC, OUN, as well as the leading politicians of Europe and the world, religious heads and dignitaries, cultural workers and intelectuals, bringing to memory the fact that Voivodina is a special historical entity and a European garden of peoples. Today, when we are exposed to barbarianism and violence being powerless and too weak to protect ourselves, we are a part of Your conscience.

VI

On behalf of protection of those exposed to terror, in the name of humanity, in the name of the murdered, tortured, mistreated, displaced, humiliated and those brought down in misery, we ask for quick and efficient help by the international community.

VII

We beg of you to do all that is in your power to gain insight in the real state of human rights and freedoms in Voivodina, either through mediation of the OUN or in any other way, and to secure their observation, guaranteeing safe and normal life to all citizens, protecting their private property and goods, irrelevant of what nation and religion they belong to.

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VIII

We want Voivodina without arms (demilitarized) and conflicts, without concentration camps and terror, as a democratic community of equal and satisfied citizens.
Tens of thousands of victims firmly believe in justice, hoping that the democratic world will understand and accept this our appeal. We remain in belief that it shall not be in vain.

Zagreb, 25 August 1992

President of the Union of Croat Refugees
And Displaced Persons from Voivodina

Dr. Milan Bičanić (signed)

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

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TESTIMONIES ABOUT THE EXAMPLES OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS VIOLATIONS AGAINST CROATS IN VOIVODINA - SERBIA

NOVI SLANKAMEN, 3,500 inhabitants, 80% Croats, 20% Serbs and others

530 entry registers were issued in the Parish Office.
Parish priest: Eduard Španović.
Total number of CROATS driven away or moved out by force: 1,109.
Among them were the following families of German origin: Anton Bender, Juraj Habenšus, Mihael Majer and Nikola Albot.

In Novi Slankamen, violence, show of force, reign of terror and other forms of repression against Croats began on May 2, 1991, when the Croatian flag was removed by force from the Croatian Peasants' House in the centre of the village. The flag was removed by the municipality of Inđija police, on the initiative of Serbian extremists-Chetniks. On this day threats of slaughter, eavesdropping on telephone conversations etc. began. The entire social and political life in the village stopped. Among those who were threatening Croatians by phone the most prominent were Chetniks from the village: Teodor Kotarac, Slaven Ognjanovac, Željko Ognjanovac, Janko Ognjanovac, Stevan Milošević, secretary of the primary school.

Terror continued with violent break-ins into Croatian houses, robbery, seizure. One night Duško Kuzmanov, Serb, broke into the house of his neighbour, Stjepan Krznarić, and tried to take his tractor by force. A fight broke out and Duško Kuzmanov temporarily abandoned his intention of robbery. The police did not come until the following day. They drew a record, in which the guilt was attributed to Krznarić only. Soon after that Krznarić received the verdict - penalty and prison. Serbian court punished the one who was defending his property in his own house. Stjepan Krznarić, his wife and three under-age children (Danijela, Jelena and Helena) escaped to Croatia.

In the night of May 26, 1991 at 11:30 a group of Chetniks entered the village singing Chetnik songs, shouting, threatening the Croats and firing at the houses. After their orgies they left, at 2 a.m. None of the authorities intervened to stop them.

At the session of the municipal assembly of Inđija, Prof. Radmilo Đurđević requested that the municipal deputies consent to the expulsion of his pupil, Vlatko Fijala, Croat (excellent pupil, awarded several times), and of other Croatian children, in order to make Croatians move out of Novi Slankamen and Inđija as soon as possible.

After all these events many Croats from Novi Slankamen stopped sleeping in their homes but went to other places each evening, while some slept in gardens and fields.

On June 13, 1991 the headmaster of the Novi Slankamen primary school ordered the janitor, Miroslav Matić, Serb, to burn all old Croatian books from the former Croatian school. When the witness of the event Vlatko Fijala, teacher at the school, asked him why he was doing that, he answered: "The headmaster ordered me to do it."

On June 29, 1991 Chetniks, headed by Mile Ulemek, barged into a bar, called "Buffet", owned by Blaženka Vodenac, Croatian, firing at the walls and destroying all that could be destroyed. They forced the Croats who were present to cross themselves with three fingers (as Serbs do) and kiss Slobodan Milošević's picture. Eventually they took away the owner of the "Buffet", Blaženka Vodenac, and raped her.

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After that event, which has not been punished, Blaženka and her sister Slavica escaped to Austria, her brother Mato with his wife and under-age daughter to Croatia. Soon after that brothers Soldo with the family fled from Novi Slankamen, also to Croatia.

In the dawn of June 13, 1991 Chetniks fired at Mišo Ijuka's house and threw several bombs into the courtyard. On this occasion the aunt of Mišo's wife Marica was injured. The Ijuka family fled to Zagreb, together with their son-in-law, daughter and their sons. Not long after these events the famous Croatian and Srijem folk poet Ivan Bonus and his four children (Jelena, Marica, Katarina and the under-age son Josip) fled from the village under threat of death. A little after, due to threats of state terrorism, violence, physical maltreatment and forced mobilization, the following families and individuals escaped to Hungary:
Ilija Rukavina, Predrag Kotarac, Stevo Vidalina, Jugoslav Barković, Zvonimir Barković, Vladimir Barković, Miroslav Frič, Zvonimir Mesić, Ivan Mesić, families Cindrić, Rukavina and Grbač, the families of Đuro Bartulac and Zlatko Bartulac and many others.

In the primary school the music teacher Mirela Jakovljević was forcing Croat children to learn the new Serbian anthem "Bože pravde" (anthem of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1918-1941). Croat children refused to learn the Serbian anthem, which resulted in failing grades and maltreatment. After that, boys of Serbian nationality took knives to school and threatened Croatian children. Nobody tried to stop that.

The following employees of Croat nationality were dismissed from the "Ukus" shop in Novi Slankamen, without argumentation: Mihajlo Majer, Nikola Albot, Ana Karić, Antun Augustinović. Nikola Kotarac, Serb, got a job, although he does not have proper qualification and necessary experience.

Nadežda Jovanović, technical education teacher, brings a radio set to classes and listens, together with the children, to Radio Belgrade news, commenting on what the Ustasha are doing to Serb children in Croatia. She also reads them newspapers during the lesson in order to teach them about the events at the front. She threatens all those who have Croat relatives in Croatia. Not to mention grading of Croat children.

In the Inđija police department the chief policeman is Mane Dražić (born in Knin), who, together with his group, terrorizes Croats from Novi Slankamen, Beška, Maradik, Inđija. In Novi Slankamen a real persecution of eminent persons has begun, whom Mr. Dražić publicly threatens with beating, ransacking and expulsion. He stops vehicles in the street, turns people out, threatens and even beats them. Witnesses of this have been: Perica Radenić, Vlatko Fijala, Pajo Fijala, Josip Imabrišić, Vjakoslav Aleksić, Ivica Mesić, Dražen Krčelić, Miroslav Martić, parish priest Eduard Španović and others.

The policeman Dražić stopped the teacher Vlatko Fijala and his entire family, who were on their way back from the vineyard, in the street, turned them out of the vehicle, searched them and the vehicle and threatened. When asked why he was doing that, he answered: "Because you are Ustasha!" His answer to: "How long will this go on like this?" was: "Forever, until one of us gets fed up."

When they returned from the front at Bijelo Brdo, Zoran Kotarac, Teodor Stevanović and Ognjanovac (Serbs) forced Damir Vidalin (Croat) to throw a bomb at the house of Đuro, whose son had escaped from the front. They had organized a committee for liquidation of those who had run away from the front, but the executors were supposed to be Croats. Damir Vidalin and his wife and small child escaped to his father in Zadar. His grandmother and great-grandmother remained in the house,

constantly molested by the police.

More people ran away in the meantime, among others Nikola and Stevan Sajfert with their families to Germany. Nikola's house was broken into and robbed. The robbery was reported to the police but nothing happened. Đuro Barulac with his family ran away to Austria, family Šutija to Germany, family Franjić (twin brothers with wives and children) to Croatia.

On September 15, 1991 Dragan Prodanović (Serb) tried to force Perica Radenić from Novi Karlovci to leave so that he could move into his dairy. He introduced himself as "Chetnik" and threatened to slaughter them all. Radenić escaped to Bosnia with his wife and two small children. After some time he came back, while his family remained in Bosnia.

On September 15, 1991 in the evening a group of chetniks barged into Novi Slankamen and beat the children Ivana and Snježana Bošenski, who were on their way home. Kulišić and Sušilović came by and tried to defend them but got beaten themselves and had to ask for medical aid.

After numerous threats and blackmails, Dr. Josip Damjakov and his wife and one-year-old child fled to Austria.

In Inđija terrible maltreatment of children began, who travel to school there every day. Chetniks were barging into buses, threatening to murder and beat them. Teachers were calling Croats by names in public, stopping them in the street and asking about their nationality. Groups of young Serbian men were given the task by the police to beat and rob them (money, watches, gold). Many children left school (Stanislav Suhanek, Željko Nemet and others). Parents organized themselves and went to Inđija every day to pick up the children. There was no petrol so the parents had to go to Inđija by bus at 5 p.m. and return with the children at 8 p.m. Because of fear the children went on sick-leave to avoid mistreatment. The teacher Zorica Popović and her husband Kosta were threatening people in public and proposing them to move away. They tried to force their neighbour Mrs. Crvenka to leave everything and go to Croatia.

Young men beaten by the police, Ivo Peić, Mirko Peić and Antun Gomerčić, fled to Croatia.

Even the headmaster Grujić stopped communicating with the teachers Vlatko and Marica Fijala. They stopped inviting them to staff meetings. Teachers from the school in Novi Karlovci - Popović, Opačić, Savić, Panković - turned their pupils against the teacher Fijala. They kept saying that all Croats in Serbia should be slaughtered and that the Serbian people from Croatia should replace them. New refugees again: Đuro Imbrišić fled to avoid mobilization, Božo Perić fled to Hungary with his wife and three children. Again many people disappeared overnight but the parents did not want to say where their children were because they feared revenge.

On December 3, 1991 the biggest mobilization in the municipality of Inđija began. Uniforms and weapons were distributed in the Novi Karlovci school. The married couple Fijala came to the second class. Many people and soldiers were standing in front of the school. Their colleague Boško Čortan met them at the door and took them to the headmaster, who told them that their colleague Anđelko Opačić was armed and wanted to kill them. He told them to run away as soon as possible because they would get killed if he saw them. The colleague Čortan took them to the vehicle and they fled. The headmaster shouted after them not to come to work because he could not guarantee their security during the class. The following day, on December 4, 1991, the teacher Vlatko Fijala went to work to Novi Slankamen and told

the headmaster Grujić what had happened. The headmaster said that they should not work together as they were both Croats. The Fijalas asked for unpaid leave (until the situation settled), as the headmaster had advised them. They were not granted it. Threats occurred again and they fled to Hungary with their son. On December 19, 1991 the police barged into Slavica Videlin's house and threatened.

On December 26, 1991 the police searched Vid Perić's house. On December 28, 1991 Chetniks threatened Mijac and Umrlić in the "M" bar. That night Stjepan Mijac fled to Hungary with his wife and children. The same thing was done by Umrlić, Diković, Sabljak, Štrkalj and others.

On January 8, 1992 the police seized the legally owned hunting weapons from Đuro Barković, Stjepan Fijala, Mirko Berković.

On January 9, 1992 four chetniks barged into Stjepan Fijala's house, making noise, smashing things, asking where Vlatko was so that they could slaughter him, beating Pero Rajković, the cousin who happened to be there. Stjepan Fijala fled to Novi Sad with his wife and asked for medical aid for her, leaving the 78-year-old bed-ridden grandmother in the house. After that the Chetniks left and broke into the house of their son Vlatko Fijala. Three families with seven Children moved in. They had cars with registration plates PS 47-42, PS 35-31, PS 16-17. On that and on the following days a large number of chetniks from Croatia moved into 22 houses. Chetniks loaded a lorry with valuable things from Arsa Valović's house and drove away, with the blessing of the police, and then new people moved in. Valović is over 70 years old - he had moved to his cousin Mijo (carpenter).

On January 11, 1992 the village Chetnik Srbislav Škara demolished the rooms of the Croatian House and beat the janitor Mirko Bobek. He destroyed extremely valuable books and about 20 over 100-year-old paintings from the Croatian past.

At their session on the evening of January 11, 1992, Chetniks and the officials of the Local Community decided to legalize the stay of Chetniks in the houses they moved into. The data are available at the Local Community. They also drew up a list of Croatian houses that Chetniks would be able to move into legally, because a new wave of Chetniks fleeing from Croatia is being expected. Members of the Crisis Headquarters are: Čurčić, Simić, Milurović, Čonić, Kaplar and Milošević (school secretary), all of them Serbs.

The police chooses whom to beat. This time it was Stjepan Diković, whose son is in Hungary with his family (the most well-to-do man in the village). Ivica Šutija, whose both sons are in exile, was taken out of the village by the policeman Dražić and his group, beaten unconscious and threatened with murder. He fled to Zagreb. Dražen Krčelić was beaten, too. He was beaten so mercilessly that the skin on his belly cracked all over. He had to ask for medical aid.

On January 14, 1992, family Martić and their children fled to Zagreb. A few days before them the following families ran away: Pažin (four), Berislav Pažin (four), Marijan Bilobrk (four), Mirko Mataković (four), Petar Gomerčić (three children and wife), Blaž Peić (wife and four children), Marina Imbrešić (ran away with two under-age children because she could not stand being maltreated at school - where she was assistant worker - because her husband had run away to avoid mobilization), Stipe Krznarić (wife and three children), Ilija Rukavina (wife and son), Stjepan Albot (wife and two children), Vjekoslav Vidalina (wife and son), Nikola Jović with his family. Many people have packed to be ready to flee if they have to.

The police searches all those who are running away and seizes their valuables.

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On January 20, 1992 two explosive devices were thrown in front of the Croatian House. After that Đuro Barković's corn crib was poured with petrol (at night) and set on fire, but did not burn down (in spite of everything Đuro Barković has not moved away because his daughter is married to a Serb (Živković from Novi Karlovci) and his son, too (Radomirović).

On January 22, 1992 it was again the family Fijala's turn. "Politika ekspres" published an article on Vlatko Fijala, his alleged co-operation with the Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ), propaganda material against Serbia and weapons allegedly found at his place, etc.

His friends advised him not to return home. The goal of all this was to seize his property and drive his parents away from Slankamen.

Slankamen has been taken over by fear, panic, anarchy. In the town, where two thirds of the population were Croats, there are no more young people. Only the oldest and the bravest have stayed. It is only a question of time when they will be started to move, too.

"Srijemske novine" of October 2, 1991, published an article in which a Chetnik volunteer said that their military commanders allowed them to kill every suspicious Croat at the front (i.e. mobilized Croats). We expect that this will soon start happening in the villages where Croats live, too.

WE PRAY FOR PEACE, WE PRAY FOR HELP,
WE DON'T WANT TO PERISH FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH,
WITHOUT NAME AND TOMBSTONE.

Zagreb, February 26, 1992

President of the Union:

Dr. Milan Bičanić

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MOROVIĆ, MUNICIPALITY OF ŠID, SRIJEM - VOIVODINA - SERBIA

The first serious Chetnik act of violence against Croatian people in Morović coincided with the disappearance of two brothers, engineers, without a trace after they were taken away by unknown armed men at about 6 p.m. Chetniks barged into their house without a warrant. They wanted to arrest Mata Abijanović and to take him for interrogation only. They were trying to convince the others of their honest intentions and said that another member of the family could come along with Mata. Mata's brother Ivica went with him, while Mata's mother, wife (Serb) and two children stayed home. Mata and Ivica never returned. "No one knows anything" about them in the police department, although they were seen in Šid (the evening they were taken away).

A few days after that, Krunoslav Bertić, Marijan Babić and Ante (I don't know his family name) were beaten up. They were taken to Šid by armed Chetniks who had no warrant of arrest. After that Marijan Plavotić was beaten, not in Šid but in the field outside the village, and at the same time Mata Lukin, too. Very soon Chetniks broke into Stjepan Okrugić's house (he has six children) and harassed him. They also broke into the parish priest's flat and turned his things upside down. The parish priest had to flee to Germany because he was being threatened.

The tablet on the church, with the Croatian red and white chequer coat of arms painted on it, was shot at, and the chandelier of great value knocked down. Before that Josip Lucić and Pavle Paljević was beaten up while on fishing, and as a result of this Pavle became distracted and lost reason. Matija Gubec street (Šokački šor) was left without most of its inhabitants. The people have left their homes and property and fled abroad or to Croatia. Croats who stayed there are living in a "horror village", as one man said. The same was in store for other Croats in Voivodina, especially in Gibarac and Kukujevac. Especially harassed are the members of the Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina (DSHV), all Croats are labelled Ustashas, their landed property is being listed, cattle and crops left in the fields sold and the money used for the Chetnik army. This is done by committees established in all villages of Voivodina.

Krunoslav Bertić from Morović has given us the following list with names of Croats expelled from the village that he could remember.

1. Horvat Zlatko-1965-	CROATIA
2. Posavčić Josip-1942-	-"-
3. Posavčić Milijamo-1942-	-"-
4. Posavčić Vesna-1974-	-"-
5. Purić Željko-1975-	-"-
6. Babić Dragan-197o-	-"-
7. Babić Marijan-196o-	-"-
8. Babić Augustin-1958-	-"-
9. Babić Marija-197o-	
1o. Babić Ivan ___	
11. Babić Marija__	-
12. Babić Dragica--	-"-
13. Babič__	
14. Babić__	
15. Babić Nikola__	
16. Babić Dragica__	
17. Babić__	
Babić Ivo-1932-	__
19. Plavotić Antun-1928-	___
2o. Plavotić Matija-1935-	___

/...

1. Okrugić Antun-1952-	GERMANY
2. Okrugić Marija-1953-	-"-
3. Okrugić Anita-1982-	-"-
4. Okrugić Ilija-1958-	-"-
5. Okrugić Kata-1966-	-"-
6. Okrugić Vedrana-1987-	-"-
7. Okrugič Tomislav-199o-	-"-
8. Okrugić Mitar-1959-	-"-
9. Okrugić Vlada-1965-	-"-
1o. Šerić Marija-1964-	-"-
11. Šerić Željko-1988-	-"-
12. Lucić Josip-1955-	AUSTRIA
13. Lucić Marija-196o-	-"-
14. Lucić Sanja-198o-	-"-
15. Lucić Ilija-1986-	-"-
16. Kozijak Marko-1953-	GERMANY
17. Kozijak Verica-1958-	-"-
18. Kozijak Mario-__	-"-
19. Kozijak Igor- __	-"--
2o. Kovrdžić Kruno-1963-	-"-
21. Kovrdžić Pavle-1965-	-"-

/...

1. Anđelković Jakob-196o-	GERMANY
2. Purić Marinko___	-"-
3. Plavotić Marijam-1962-	-"-
4. Plavotić Marija-1965-	-"-
5. Bertić Darko-1959-	-"-
6. Bertić Ana-1966-	-"-
7. Bertić Ivana___	-"--
8. Bertić Jasmina__	-"-
9. Bertić Dragica-1936-	-"-
1o. Bertić Krunoslav-1957-	-"-
11. Posavčić Danijel-1967-	-"-
12. Lodomerski Željko-1968-	-"-
13. Bekerek Goran-1963-	-"-
14. Bekerek Sanja-1968-	-"-
15. Bekerek Igor-1988-	-"-
16. Kavedžić Ilija-194o-	-"-
17. Kavedžić Janja-1942-	-"-
18. Kavedžić Zvonko-1963-	-"-
19. Vuković Ivo-1967-	-"-
2o. Vuković Anđelka-1968-	-"-
21. Plavotić Ilija-1958-	-"-
22. Plavotić Ružica-1963-	-"-
23. Plavotić Marija.1985-	-"-
24. Plavotić Mladen-1987-	-"-
25, Plavotić Franca-199o-	-"-
26 Šerić Ilija-1961-	-"-
27. Šerić Marija-1969-	-"-
28. Šerić Ivana-1991-	-"-
29. Šerić Slavica-197o-	-"-
3o. Bertić Marko-193o-	-"-
31. Bertić Anica-1972-	-"-
32. Bertić Petar-196o-	-"-
33. Bertić Zlata-1968-	-"-
34. Bertić Marko-199o-	-"-
35. Kanjo Vita.1929-	"

/...

1. Prskalo Dragan.1965-	BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
2. Prskalo Željko-1967-	-"-
3. Prskalo Marija-199o-	-"-
4. Purić Ivica.194o-	-"-
5. Purič Kata-1942-	-"-
6. Purić Mata-	—
1. Okrugić Slavica-1972-	CANADA

DISAPPEARED

1. Abijamović Mata-195o- detained
2. Abijamović Ivica-1952- -"- -"-

Parish priest

- Petrovic Petar

There were 620 baptized persons in the parish

/...

Name and Surname: Stjepan Cupar, born on September 20th 1955 in Kukujevci, Croat, married, plant electrician by profession, unemployed. Fled on November 21st 1991 to Zagreb area where he still dwells. Address: M. Rešetara Street No. 26, Zagreb.

I make the following

STATEMENT

Since the aggression against Croatia we, the Croats from the place of Kukujevci, were constantly exposed to mistreatment by the officials of the police department of VOivodina and by armed paramilitaries (Chetniks) who, under protection of the Yugoslav Army, barged into the village and beat up in public whomever they wanted. Then in November armed units of the Serbian police (special units, as they were called) would barge into the village catching two or three local people of Croat nationality and, under pretext that we were all illegally armed, they searched for weapons, radios, and they beat up people unconscious, but couldn't find any weapons. They came into my house on November 20th 1991 at half past three in the afternoon. I was in the bathroom when they grabbed me, letting me only dress, and collected my hunting gun, for which I have a regular licence because I am a registered hunter. They handcuffed me and threw me into an armoured vehicle. In the vehicle was already Josip Šorgić, tied up, a man of about 65. There Nenad Bućin, who - so far as I could observe - was the commander, and the driver began swearing and telling us we (the Ustasha) were finished. Then he started to beat me and ask about weapons and radio. I didn't know about those (and I believe it was only an excuse, because I still really don't have the slightest idea about it), so they took us in front of the house of Petar Paradžiković, arrested him also and took us all to Fuška Gora (7 km from where we lived, to where our weekend houses and vineyards were), escorted by another police car. There they terribly threatened us beating and kicking us eventually, forcing us to tell where the weapons were. They searched all three weekend houses but didn't find anything. Then they separated us, took me down and fired a shot from a pistol near my head, telling the others up there I was finished and it was their turn now if they didn't tell everything . They threatened us (Nenad Bućin said that when we get back home, he would pull out my children's eyes and make me eat them, and many other horrible things). When we started out for home we had to stretch out the little finger and the ring-finger of our right hands, and they would strike with their knives as if they would cut them off, so that we could make the sign of the cross with only three fingers. When we were about three kilometers off, they took us one by one out of the armoured vehicle, beating us outside and forcing us to confess (they kicked us with their feet, heels and I don't know what more). Arriving in the village they left Petar Paradžiković in his street, then they took away Josip Šorgić. One policeman who stayed with me in front of Šorgić's house put his pistol under my chin and pulled his trigger, but the pistol wasn't loaded, which I didn't know because he said he would kill me if I didn't tell). Later on they took me in front of my house around half past seven in the evening and threatened to kill us all, that we had to vanish, that they would come to me every night to beat or even kill me (depending on whether a Serb was killed in the war). That night they came three more times, standing in front of the house, but they didn't enter. Tomorrow afternoon another police group, who drove in a big van, again beat up people in the village, so

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before evening I sent my wife and three children with a bag first to Hungaria and then to Austria, where my wife has a sister, whereas I wanted to stay for the night and in the morning flee for Croatia. Around ten in the evening I was behind my smokehouse in the yard. I didn't dare to go into the house when I saw armed policemen jump over the fence, run around the house, open up doors, with some more coming through the gate calling me by my name. My mother came out and some of them went into the house, while I slowly stealed through the backyard and ran for a field of maize, where I spent a night and in the dawn I fled to Bosnia (Šamac) and then to Zagreb on November 22nd 1991. I make this statement of my own free will and I stand behind every word of it.
Zagreb, March 24th 1992

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

I, Gojko Jošan Ćulibrk, born in Bač, municipality of Bač, on 19 February 1964; nationality: Croat; last residence: Bač, ul. J.N.A. 138; present residence: Zagreb, Oboj 40, M.Z. Bukovac; occupation: mechanic; permanently employed in "Pismoslikarija Jerić" in Zagreb, married, give the following

STATEMENT

My problems began in primary school. Teachers of Serb nationality ignored me because I was a child of a Croatian, immigrant from Croatia. At first they forbade us to write in Croatian, because of my speech I was ignored in company, at work, in the shops. Whenever I came back after a trip to my homeland Croatia, the villagers treated me in a hostile manner. Why I dressed in a different way and nicer, had money, behaved in a more cultured manner? That's what Serbs couldn't understand. In my village the majority of people are Croats (55%), but, in the last two wars we have been forced to move out on a massive scale, or we can stay there and die. A lot of Chetniks move in from Serbia, they mobilize Croats and force them to go to the war. Those who complain get arrested and are taken to detention camps in Sombor and Sremska Mitrovica. I was dismissed from my job at ILP JEDINSTVO, Bačka Palanka, department for galvanization, on 9 November 1990. I was unwanted because I am a Croat. After I had been working there for four and a half years they told me I would poison the water. I married Jadranka (Jandrejčić) Ćulibrk from Virovitica on 6 October 1990, and the cup was full for the Serbs because she is a Croat - from Zagorje.
We were not able to buy neither bread nor shoes in the shop, I had to call the manager to get what I wanted to buy, after a quarrel and a lot of troubles. Their policy is that all is theirs, that Chetniks are the most intelligent and the strongest people and can do what they want. We, Croats, don't have any rights. The most prominent in this are the people from the Municipality, president of the Municipality, president of the Executive Council Svitlica, Čedo Drobac, Nada Stupar, Rajko and Boro Stojanović, Rajko Ilić, Miroslav Crnomarković, chief of the police Malbaša, Stevo Opačić, manager of "Metaloprerada". The Serbs have taken all positions of responsibility in the Municipality. We have been forbidden to have our own paper or flag, when we go to the church we have to do it secretly, followed by shouting of the Chetniks: "Ustashas!" Last year an explosive was planted in the Catholic church and the door was blown up. They bombed Croatian houses in October, explaining that it was a mistake, that they were supposed to bomb Vukovar. On that occasion many houses were damaged. I had to go either to the war or to a detention camp. Me and my wife chose to flee to our homeland. Bishop Krmpotić told us to go through Hungary while that was still possible, so we started on 9 March 1992, leaving everything behind, the house and the land. We are here now, but we have no rights here either, because we are from another state. We pray to Christ that our homeland help us. That's all. Thank you very much!
The statement was given by Jošan Gojko Ćulibrk.
"I have given this statement without compulsion. Gojko."

In Zagreb,

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Marijan Ciprić, born in Sremska Mitrovica on 15 June 1973, nationality: Croat, residence: Primorska 15 - Šid, marital status: single; unemployed; occupation: pupil in the fourth form of secondary school. At present in the Republic of Croatia, Voćarska 106, seminary, Zagreb.
I give the following

S T A T E M E N T

As I have chosen an occupation that isn't quite to the liking of Serbian gentlemen, my first troubles began, so to say, on 1 November 1988 when I went to the Šalata seminary. The attacks at that time were not as bad as last year, to be more precise, in 1991. That summer, when I returned home to Šid, they began assaulting me because I am Croatian and telling me that I was an Ustasha. The thing that most bothered them was that I was helping guys of Croat nationality who were doing their military service in JNA (Yugoslav Army), stationed in Šid.
Everybody knew that we are Croats and my father was proud of it, so they often wrote things on our house, opened our gate...
Also, they knew that my father was a member of HDZ (Croatian Democratic Union) and that's what bothered them most. That's why reservists came to our house and searched through it as many as three times. Whenever they came they first asked for me and my father. However, they never caught us, because they couldn't catch us. Still, during their last search sometime in November, I was already in Đakovo but they took my father for interrogation and kept him until 3 a.m., when they let him go, and as soon as he returned home he sat down in the car, taking my brother and my mother along, and joined me at my place in Đakovo, where they are still living.
At present I live in the Republic of Croatia, where I am continuing my education.

Zagreb, 23 March 1992

Zlatomir Pinter, born on August 23rd 1953 in Novi Beograd, Croat, resident of Plavna, "June 16th 1965"- Street Nr. 1, municipality of Bač, the Autonomous Province of Voivodina, identity card Nr. 13883/82, police department of Bač, married (wife and two children, age 4 and 11), economist by profession. At the moment dwelling in Dugo Selo , municipality of Dugo Selo, Kolodvorska Street Nr. 22a, Republic of Croatia, where I am also registered as a displaced person.
Of my own free will and without any compulsion I make the following

STATEMENT

From the middle of September 1990. on my family and I were exposed to various pressures by extremist Chetnik groups and political structures of the municipality of Bač (president of the Municipal Assembly of Bač, Marinko Antonić, secretary of the Executive Council of the Municipal Assembly of Bač, Dr. Milenko Banić, president of the committee of the Socialist Party of Serbia in Bač, Mile Ćulibrk etc.). The pressure took form of constant threats to burn down and blow up our house, throw bombs in through the windows, as well as threats of physical assault on me and members of my family. This torture was conducted through the president of local organization of SPS for Plavna, Petar Širić, the chief of municipal branch office in Plavna, Marica babić, and their followers who supported them (Stojan Zelen, Ilinka Popović, Dragan Županjac, Slavko Gajić, Mirko Marinković, Dušan Radišić, Milan Kovačević - all from Plavna), as well as through pro-Chetnik individuals from other places of the municipality of Bač (Novak Janković from Bačko Novo Selo, Vojin Vlajić and Gojko Grbić from Bač proper, Đurađ Fibišan from Petrovaradin). The afforementioned persons constantly terrorized us, with the police in Bač doing nothing to stop it. Because of my political activity in legally registered political party Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina (DUCV) I was exposed to constant threats and publicly named Ustasha. Individuals (Novak Janković, Vojin Vlajić, Stojan elen, Dragan Županjac, Dušan Radišić) assaulted me physically on several occasions, threatening to slaughter me and alike. I turned several times to the police department of Bač, of Autonomous Province ov Voivodina, of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, with DUCV and also with a petition by 257 citizens of the local community of Plavna. But the authorities of the Province of Voivodina and of the Republic of Serbia did not take measures to protect us from terror we were exposed to, so the violence continued. My wife got ill on account of nervous tension. My children were daily exposed to pressures at school and in the street.
My sister was also put under terrible pressure - she was beaten up and her private trade shop twice demolished, her daughter Marina was beaten up at her school in Odžaci and her elder daughter Julijana was beaten up in Belgrade where she went for her studies.
At the beginning of September 1992 mobilization of the Yugoslav Army reserve started. A draft notice was prepared for me, too, and I knew it wasn't just a "military exercise" like it read in the notice, but I was to be sent to war to Eastern Slavonia (Republic of Croatia) - so I had to flee through Hungaria, leaving my house and whole property behind. My family fled with me, because I couldn't leave them at the mercy of the Chetniks and regime of Voivodina and Serbia.
Zagreb, March 24th 1992 (Seal of the UNION OF CROATIAN REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

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Name and Surname: Matija Augustinović, born on August 17th 1959 in Zemun, married, unemployed, Croat, at the moment dwelling in Zagreb having fled Novi Slankamen. Address: Susedgradska Street No.5, Zagreb, a refugee. Shop assistant by profession.

Without compulsion I make the following

STATEMENT

My problems began when I was fired from "Ukus" company in Inđija on August 1st 1991. Then pressures began, that I didn't belong in Slankamen but in Croatia. Men were summoned to the reserve and everybody who went had a bad time, because the Croats were humiliated and psychologically mistreated. Then I decided to leave for Croatia in order not to suffer the fate of those who were mobilized. I arrived in Croatia on November 10th 1991. My wife, child, father and mother remained in Slankamen. They started threatening my family, so my wife and child came to Croatia on January 6th 1992. Since my two brothers were also in Croatia, there was no more place for my parents in Slankamen. They came to their house and began threatening to slaughter them if they don't emigrate. So it came that some Serbs offered them to exchange houses, under coercion of course, which they had to accept and were, normally, cheated. When I heard about it I went to Slankamen to get them out of there and normally take the papers which I left back in the house. I came to my home in Slankamen and saw what was going on there, without being able to do anything about it, naturally. Then they arrested me for having being to Croatia. They took me to the police department in Inđija, mistreated me, beat me up, called me names, forced me to say that I was Ustasha and that I slaughtered Serbs. They forced me also to talk about others who at that time were no longer in Slankamen. They searched everything, looking even into the heels of my shoes, and when they couldn't find and pin anything on me they finally stopped beating me. I didn't know I would have hard time on account of my driver's licence which I had reported lost two years ago. Having found it I reported it, but they aptly used that opportunity to jail me and wanted to bring me to trial promptly on charge of having misused official documents. They took both my driver's licences, but fortunately there is God above us, and so it came to be that the judge was absent. I asked them to let me see my parents, which they did in the evening telling me to report to them again in the morning. The same night I fled to Croatia, where I still dwell.

Zagreb, March 24th 1992

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

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Name and Surname: Pavle Kraljević, born on June 24th 1949 in Kukujevci, Croat, married, plumber by profession, unemployed. Fled on November 20th 1991 to the territory of Croatia i.e. to Zagreb and dwells in Prisoj Street 4a.
I make the following

STATEMENT

At the beginning of 1991. my troubles started with the troubles and war in our beautiful Homeland. With those troubles and mistreatment on my job for being a Croat, I managed somehow to survive until November 11th 1991, when the police of the Province stopped me at my way home from work. They had number 45 and a Serbian flag on their police car. They demanded me to show them my identity card and they looked into some list of theirs on which there was my name and surname. They put me in their car together with two more of my friends and took us outside of the village, where they beat us with a baton, with their hands, with rifle-butt, and kicked us with their feet. I was beaten up and came back home with blood all over me, where I spent one single night awaiting the police who came and ordered me to vanish with my family in the next 24 hours under threat of liquidation.

I make this statement of my own free will

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Marinko Raić, born on November 15th 1967 in Novi Sad, Croat, resident of Petrovaradin, Mažuranićeva Street 86, married, unemployed, locksmith by profession. At the moment as a displaced person dwelling in Dubrava, Zagreb, Zdenačka Street 21. I make the following
STATEMENT

Having lived in Petrovaradin ever since I was born I have had many problems. On February 2nd 1992 I received a summons for a military exercise ordering me to report to military authorities on February 19th 1992 so as to depart for Dalj, which I couldn't do. Through Bosnia I came to Zagreb running away from the provocations back home and from the military police who came to look for me in my house twice searching it. Later on my wife and my parents suffered various pressures and provocations because I didn't report to the military authorities for mobilization.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 25th 1992

Boris Čavar, born on December 25th 1963 in Široki Brijeg, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croat, resident of Beška, Pinkijeva Street 39 (region of Srijem), single, engine-driver, worked for the railroad in Ruma, now unemployed. At the moment in Zagreb, Klara, Antun Tot Street 27. I make the following

STATEMENT

I was living in Beška and working in Ruma, when the trouble began with the attack on Croatia, first as verbal provocations. Then at three o'clock in the morning on September 21st 1991 two policemen took me from my house to the police station in Inđija for a so-called "informative conversation" with the police chief, where there were two inspectors from Ruma.
They interrogated me about all kinds of things. The charge was: "taking photographs of a military transport", although I was at my work that day. But they suspected me because I was a part-time correspondent from the region of Srijem for the Croatian daily "Večernji list". They released me at ten o'clock in the morning, after having waited for seven hours. I wasn't physically mistreated.At night on December 20th 1991 I fled together with my brother and his family to Zagreb to avoid getting mobilized into the war against Croatia. They took away my hunting shotgun, although as a registered hunter I had a licence for it. Our employment books remained at our firms. I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 25th 1992

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Antonija Raić, born on June 12th 1968 in Novi Sad, Croat, resident of Petrovaradin, Mažuranićeva Street 86, married, unemployed, leather-processing technician by profession. A refugee in Zagreb, Zdenačka Street 21. I make the following

STATEMENT

I came to Zagreb with my child after my husband. He got a summons for a military exercise on February 15th 1992., but he refused to go. As he didn't report to the military authorities on the specified day the military police came and asked us where Marinko Raić was. We said he was in Germany for a couple of months already, but it gets around where people are, e.g. one evening a drunken reservist who defected from the barracks came boasting of it. So they spread a word around in Petrovaradin that my husband joined the Croatian police. I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 25th 1992

Ratko Filipović, born on March 29th 1963 in Šid, Croat, administration clerk by profession, single, present address: the barracks in Trstenik. I make the following

STATEMENT

I fled Šid on September 25th 1991 because of forceful mobilization and because of the rising pressure, with the purpose of joining the armed forces of Croatia in oreder to contribute my full share to defending my country Croatia. While I was in Šid, Croat houses were being searched and various kinds of pressure on Croat families exerted, taking also form of physical violence. I want to point out that my family has remained there: my father Virgil Filipović, my mother Paulina Filipović and my brother Zvonimir Filipović.
Note: I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion or persuasion.

* * *

Željko Radenić, born on March 20th 1965 in Stari Slankamen, Croat, married, electrician by profession, employed, present address: Novi Zagreb, Sv. Klara, Ragićeva Street bb. I make the following

STATEMENT

I fled Slankamen because of mobilization, having been degraded in my working place by being assigned to a lower post, constant transferring from one job to another. without even giving me my employment book. Constant threats over the phone, I never went out at night, shooting, beating up and so on. When I got draft notice, I fled together with my wife.
Constant lies on Belgrade radio and television had to be put up with day by day. Threat on local radio-station (Radio Inđija) to all Croats in Slankamen.
I make this statement without compulsion and of my own free will.

In Zagreb, March 26th 1992

Vladimir Vinković, born on December 24th 1969 in Bač, municipality of Bač, Croat, single, chimney sweeper by profession, unemployed, the latest dwelling at: S. Radića Street 15, Sports Hall "Martinovka", Unska Street bb. I make the following

STATEMENT

I fled from Plavna because of constant provocations and threats and because of exclusive mobilization of Croats by force, because they threatened me with a pistol pointing it to me and threatened to kill me swearing my Ustasha mother.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 26th 1992

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Name and Surname: Ante Gotovac, born on March 20th 1951 in Budišnja ravna, Croat, resident of Beška, Dunavska Street 73, unemployed, waiter by profession, married, father of three little girls, exiled together with wife and mother, now in Croatia, in Zagreb, Česmina Street 26 Čulinec. I make the following

STATEMENT

Problems began from the moment of foundation of the Assembly of the Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina (DUCV) on January 19th 1991. From that time on problems arose and provocations by the Serbs. On December 28th 1991 the Serbian police came, they checked my identity and told me to come to the police station in Beška for a conversation at 11,30 a.m. They were interested in the activity of DUCV. I was sitting when a policeman stood up and hit me in the face, at which I turned the other side to him as well, but he didn't hit me for the second time. The policeman's name was Repić. In that moment another policeman jumped close and started to slap me, swearing at me "fuck your mother" and "honest Croats are leaving, what are you waiting for". He raised his arm to hit me in the nose as well, but I prevented it. He pulled the chair away from under me and ordered me to stand in attention. This policeman's surname was Kostić. I asked them if there were anybody I could complain to. They told me: "You can go the God himself, but we'll break you into pieces", and said that I wouldn't make any lists with Marko Jurić who was not member of DUCV at all, or of any party whatsoever. I went to Inđija, but it was Saturday and nobody worked. So I went to Novi Sad, to the police headquarters of the Province, where a man came who heard me out and asked me "if Croats were emigrating from Beška". I said they were emigrating, but I didn't want to say why. He said that after New Year's Day he would summon Repić and Kostić who beat me, but nothing came of it. I went to the police station in Inđija, to the chief Petričević who told me that I should go home, that nobody would beat me, but telephone threats continued constantly. I madet he final decision to leave since nobody tried to protect either me or my family. Threatening and mistreatment of all kinds continued towards me as well as towards my family. When I said I wanted to exchange houses and didn't want to live in such conditions, that Croats were being driven away by the local and military authorities, they granted me permission to cross the border on that purpose.
On February 29th 1992 I left Beška and went through Hungary to Croatia.
I exchanged houses to my disadvantage, but I am glad and happy to have saved myself and my family from Serbian terror.
I make this statement of my own free will and in full consciousness.

In Zagreb, March 27th 1992

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

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Name and Surname: Ivan Kujundžija, born on June 7th 1951 in Srijemska Mitrovica, Croat, car-body mechanic by profession, unemployed, single, latest dwelling in Srijemska Mitrovica, Keršovanijeva Street 61, at the moment accommodated in Sports Hall "Martinovka", Unska Street bb. I make the following

STATEMENT

My troubles date back in 1988, as well as the troubles of my compatriots, which I also published in the media. After that rumours started that I was an Ustasha, that I distributed Kalashnikov machine guns to Croats, and various insults on my account, so I left my house on July 19th 1991. In my absence bombs were thrown on my buildings, where my mother lived. Having heard about those incidents, I returned to Mitrovica. On my return they again started with insults, throwing of bombs on my house and my car, to finally attack me in my house and beat me up on March 23rd 1992. I left Mitrovica Again and went to Tuzla to a friend, where I recovered from injuries, and on March 29th I came to Zagreb.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

In Zagreb, March 30th 1992

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS IN VOIVODINA)

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Name and Surname: Đuro Jakob, born in Inđija on January 25th, Croat, married, father of two children, unemployed, nautical technician - inland navigation. Latest dwelling at II.L.Ribara Street 89, Novi Slankamen. At the moment in Croatia, Kolarova Street 18, Zagreb.
I make the following

STATEMENT

With personal responsibility I make a statement on my problems and troubles basically on account of my ethnic origin, because I am a Croat. It all began with mobilization. I had to go because it happened during the night, at 2 a.m. I went unwillingly and under great psychological pressure, primarily because my brother Franjo Jakob had been in the Croatian Army since Croatia had first been attacked. I didn't want to shoot at the Croatian people. I didn't want to even take arms, asking the commander to grant me that. To all I said he told me "to stuff it" and that I shouldn't have been there in the first place.
So I got arms, a machine gun, and was sent to the place of Bršadin. During my whole stay there I never even fired a shot, lying down for cover and running so many times that at moments I prayed to God. Herewith I cannot make up for letting them mobilize me, but after on my return I immediately went to my country in which I shall remain. My wife and my two under age children also came with me. Prior to our arrival in Croatia, my wife had worked in the "Borivoje Ignatić" hospital as a cook. She was given notice because she was Croat, it being the only reason her superior gave her saying they had their own people for the job. I left my whole property there and now I don't have any source of income, except for the relief by the Croatian state. I make this statement in Zagreb of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 30th 1992

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Tomislav Mesić, born on January 21st 1974 in Ruma, Croat, resident of Nikinci, Kosta Nađ Street 56, single, unemployed, student of the 4th class of Grammar school. At the moment a refugee in Voćarska Street 106, Zagreb. I make the following

STATEMENT

My problems began on September 1st 1992, as I wanted to cancel my registration at the in Ruma, because I was to register at the office in Đakovo, where I went to school. There was no problem with the registration office in Ruma, but the military authorities wouldn't give me the permission with the explanation that I had to serve my term in the army first. From then on my troubles began. Psychological mistreatment started in the village aimed at my house and houses of other Croat families. The parish priest in the neighbouring village of Hrtkovci was beaten up. I arrived in Đakovo on September 5th 1991 to attend my school. From then until November I had no contact with my family. I was in Đakovo during the fight from September 15th to 18th. At the beginning of October I arrived in Zagreb. From Zagreb I left for Austria, where I dwelt for two weeks. On my return a friend from Sarajevo informed me that my brother had been mobilized but returned because they suspected him. On November 24th my mother came to me and told me that a draft notice awaited me back home and that she had a quarrel over me with the military authorities, saying that I was not to return because they would kill me if I did. Now at the moment I am a refugee in the Republic of Croatia, in Zagreb, Voćarska Street 106.

Zagreb, March 23rd 1992

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Anto Gabelić

STATEMENT

I, Anto Gabelić, born on April 25th 1955, from Sombor, Karađorđeva Street 32, in full consciousness and of my own free will make the following statement:
Before I state my case, note that I am a mason by profession, married and father of five under age children (Ilija, Mirko, Silvija, Katarina, Zorica).
Our familiy suffering began on December 22nd 1991. On that day I, my wife Jela and my children were threatened and insulted by my two closest neighbours, Ranko Petrović and Savo Vasilić. They threatened to kill and slaughter us, that we were Ustashas and Tuđman fans, miserable and poor, and that we didn't deserve but a bullet. The wives of the mentioned men, Serbs, Kata and Roza, who declared themselves to be "Bunjevke", acted towards me, my family and my wife in the same aggressive manner with many distasteful threats. One of them, Roza, swore my Ustasha mother and showed the bullet with which she would kill us because we didn't deserve anything else.
Such verbal threats and appearances happened every day until the evening of December 25th 1991. That day my neighbours began beating my children who were playing, while I was on my work. In the afternoon they again started to mistreat my children, slapping the eldest three. In the evening of the same day both my neighbours together with their wives attack our house, breaking glass on the door and windows. I report it to the police, but they never came. Tomorrow they repeated the attack, with Ranko Petrović, Savo Vasilić, their wives, mother of their wives and brother of their wives Blaž Turčik in their demolition raid. I again called the police, who came this time, making record and then going over to my neighbours. Returning from them they again came to me, threaten me and my children because I allegedly attacked my neighbours and not vice versa. The police told me that for the likes of me and my family they had a place all right, and it was a concentration camp.
Having realized that I was denied the right to personal protection and protection of my family, I left all my property and with my wife and children fled to Croatia. As a person I was hurt most by the fact that the wives of my two Serb neighbours, who together with their mother and brother declared themselves as "Bunjevci", took the most active part in destroying my hard-earned property, as well as in verbal threatening. I note that those events are known to our other Serb neighbours, too, of whom I am convinced that they would never testify to it, so for that reason I don't mention them as eye-witnesses of the aforesaid events.

Statement made in the presence of: Marija Bonus
Milan Bičanić
Jasna Bičanić

Zagreb, February 25th 1992 (Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

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Name and Surname: Josip Erdec, born on July 5th 1936 in Crkovac, retired, married, father of two boys, Croat, fled already on February 9th 1991 as a consequence of threats and provocations. At the moment in Croatia, in Zagreb, Voćarska Street No. 44. I make the following

STATEMENT

In the environment where we lived there were tenants of other ethnic origin as well, but some neighbours chose to treat us with special arrogance, drawing swastikas on our garage door, throwing burning pieces of paper into the garage, sticking matches into our locks, tearing off the cover-lid of our mailbox. We frequently received threatening letters and phone calls, being disturbed especially at night.
After democratic elections in Croatia we were often taken to responsibility for the policy of the Croatian state.
My son was frequently mistreated in his school, they forced him to use the cyrillic script and to accept historical lies about the Croatian people and its religion.
We secretly exchanged flats, but on the very day of moving out we were specially mistreated. They disturbed us as we were carrying out our things, that we were enemies of the state and of the Serbian people. They threw garbage on our things and did a number of other unpleasant things as we moved out.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, April 1st 1992

* * *

I, MILAN VRDOLJAK, born in Kukujevci, municipality of Šid, on 7 May 1953; occupation: farmer; single; unemployed; nationality: Croat; address: Ovčara 74 (c/o Stjepan Cupar),
give the following

STATEMENT

My problems began on 6 July 1991, when my house was searched while I was in Vukovar. When I returned to Kukujevci and went to the inn, about twenty armed men came up to me. They asked for my documents, I gave them. When they read them, they asked: "Are you Vrdoljak?" I said I was, and then they took me out of the village, direction Fruška Gora. They struck me on the head with a gun. One of them was shouting: "Take the silencer and kill him, damn Ustasha!" They searched my car that was in the village and the same man shouted: "Put a bomb in the car and blow it up!" After that, I couldn't walk for six days and on the seventh day I went to Stuttgart. Now I am in Zagreb, i.e. in Virovitica, at my friend Stjepan Cupar's place.
I have given this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, 30 June 1992

/...

I, Marijan Bilobrk, born in Gornji Korićani, municipality of Travnik, on 25 May 1954; nationality: Croat; lived in Novi Slankamen, Gajeva 11; occupation: sick attendant; unemployed; married, with two children; refugee in Croatia, Novi Zagreb, Klara, Rogićeva 21, make the following

STATEMENT

When my daughter, who went to school in Nova Pazova, came to see me one day, she was crying, and she said: "Daddy, we can't stay here." I asked why. "We don't have any protection here. In the bus they threaten to rape and slaughter all Croatian women, and you, Daddy, can't protect me." she said. I complained to my colleagues at work. After that I never had a moment of peace, they kept saying: "Marijan, you are in danger here, you must leave." I was patient for some time, until the police began coming up at night while I was at work. Finally I decided to run away. I escaped to Croatia on 30 October 1991.
The statement has been made without compulsion.

Zagreb, 2 April 1992

* * *

Name and family name: Cmiljko Topić, born in Beška, municipality of Inđija, on 3 February 1961; nationality: Croat; single; occupation: electrician; unemployed; on 20 September 1991 fled to the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and on 1 November 1991 to Croatia, Rijeka; address: Petrici 25 - Marinići - Rijeka; I make the following

STATEMENT

My problems began even before I got a draft notice from JNA (Yugoslav army), because in my firm we were requested to speak out for or against that regime and that politics of theirs, i.e. politics against Croatia. I was patient until 20 September, when I got that draft notice. I stopped going to work then, I was hiding for two days and trying to find a way of running away from Serbia.
I first fled to Tuzla, where I stayed in a hotel for seven days, then to Prozor to my relatives. I stayed there from 29 September to 1 November, when I felt sure that I could go to Zagreb by bus.
I stayed in Zagreb with my relatives who had a flat there and who had fled, too, from Petrovaradin. I registered as a volunteer and was mobilized on 10 December.
I was in the Zagreb 101st Brigade until 1 February, when I joined the Rijeka 128th Brigade because we had moved there. Now I'm still there.
I have made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, 7 April 1992

/...

Name and family name: Marijan Topić, born in Petrovaradin on 3 August 1965; nationality: Croat; married, father of a one-year-old son; occupation: lineman; unemployed. First fled to Poland (29 November 1991), came to Croatia on 15 January 1992. At present in Rijeka - Petrci 25 - Marinići.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I lived in Voivodina since I was born till 1991, when I left my house because of forced mobilization. I worked in Novi Sad for six years as a lineman. I had settled down, had my home and led a quiet life. My problems began when Slobodan Milošević came to power. Right away Voivodina's autonomy ended and, automatically, human rights of all Croats and other non-Serbian nations were in danger of being denied because Milošević, a man who practised ethnic discrimination, became the head of the government. People around me changed, started hating me for my origin, they even attacked my house when my wife and four-month-old child were in there. After that I sent them to Poland. Soon after that I got a draft notice, which I couldn't respond to because I can't shoot at my own people. I fled from Serbia and went to Croatia with my wife and child.
I have made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, 7 April 1992

Topić Pero, born on December 9th 1956 in Donja Vost-Prozor, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croat, married, civil defence engineer, unemployed, fled on March 27th 1992 to Rijeka in Croatia, address: Petrci 25-Rijeka.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I worked in Novi Sad in the municipal administration of Detelinara and Liman from 1980 to 1984, when I changed to public water-management company in Novi Sad. From the first day on I worked as a civil defence officer, untill the so-called "autonomists'" government was overthrown after well-known events. Then problems began not only for me but also for Hungarians and other non-Serbs in Voivodina.
In my case additional problems arose over my opposing the policy of Serbia and its leadership in public discussion on constitutional amendments, which immediately marked me as an autonomist. Labelled that way I continued working in civil defence department for some more time, but I was under strong suspicion, which forced me to change my job, although my work had been evaluated as excellent (just before I changed to a new job, an inspection of the City Secretariat of civil defence was sent down specially for me). On the new job (warehouseman) I found a complete disorder, and so in a year's time I managed to somewhat improve the situation and bring order into the warehouse. By the end of that work I was "assisted" by a refugee who was a beginner. On the day this refugee (Serb, of course) came to work I got a draft notice (although I had a wartime duty in my company). Of course, I immediately prepared to leave for Croatia. So I stayed in Rijeka, whereas my wife remained in uncompleted house which we now try to exchange for something here. I am unemployed. My wife is a secretary in the Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina (DUCV) in Novi Sad, so I have a lot of reasons to fear for her, especially because the president of DUCV and the deputy president (Mladen Lončar) were arrested as they were leaving our house, on which occasion they were physically mistreated, Lončar being also jailed and later on released in a P.O.W. exchange. I personally was detained in custody for 7 hours at the court in Ruma, when I escorted transport of things that belonged to my wife's family (they were moving away to Virovitica on that occasion).
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

April 7th 1992

/...

Name and Surname: Pavle Žarković, born on July 16th 1955 in Inđija, Croat, married, father of three children, baker by profession, unemployed, fled on February 11th 1992 Golubinci with my wife and three children to Croatia, address: Baradinov prilaz bb-Kindergarten-Utrine.
I make the following

STATEMENT

that I fled Golubinci because the Yugoslav Army and state security mistreated me and the rest of my family. For me it all started with my refusal to go to the Army for an alleged military exercise, and because in Bogojevo all Croats from Golubinci as well as the Slovaks and the Hungarians folowed me, so to say the whole battalion
deserted then since nobody wanted to go across the Danube to shoot at their people. As I returned home, I moved about the village freely, but after some time they arrested me and took me to the police station in Stara Pazova. From Pazova I was taken by the military police to a forest near Sremska Kamenica, into some kind of barracks where the military police was, all Montenegrins exclusively. Then they beat me and interrogated me in the cellar, that I should confess everything, who was the ringleader for desertion in Bogojevo and they demanded of me to tell them where I hid the weapon which I ostensibly took home with me. There I heard from a local person that an APB was issued for me, and after my release from Kamenica I fled with my wife and children to Croatia. I made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion on April 8th 1992.

* * *

Ivan Pejić, born on June 18th 1969 in Zemun, municipality of Zemun, Croat, the latest residence in Novi Slankamen, Ciglana 8, single, employed with the military police, agricultural technician. At the moment in Gradina, Bana Jelačića Street 3, municipality of Virovitica.
I make the following

STATEMENT

On June 18th 1991 at 10 a.m. the Serbian police came, picked me up and took me to the police station in Inđija, beating me along the way (policemen Mane Dražić, Trkulja, Trbojević). When they brought me to the police station in Inđija, they forced me to confess something I didn't do, i.e. pulling down the Serbian flag and beating up the policeman Mane Dražić, as well as hoisting the Croatian flag on the "Stjepan Radić" Hall and putting up a barricade. All because I was a Croat. I confessed everything because they beat me, put a knife under my throat, a pistol into my mouth, threatened me. I was released at 7,30 p.m. and at 9,20 p.m. I was already under way to Croatia. Now I'm in Croatia and work with the military police in Virovitica.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, April 22nd 1992

/...

Biljana Pavlović, born on November 24th 1965 in Zemun, Croat, single, mechanical technician, fled Zemun, Skojevska nova Street 7/5 Belgrade, Rakovica, on April 25th 1992, at the moment in Croatia, address: 33. divizije 15c, Zagreb.
I make the following

STATEMENT

Problems which compelled me to leave my hometown (Zemun) were complex. It had all started much earlier, but the greatest pressure was exerted in the last month when neither I nor my family felt our lives were safe there where we lived. There were many provocations and threats, even rumours that a refugee family (Serbs) would move into our two-room appartment, that it had already been decided whereas for us who lived there a concentration camp was prepared and it was only a matter of days or maybe even hours for it to happen. My job (secretary-typist) in the JAT air company I lost for the reason of being redundant. There I had also suffered various provocations, for the main reason of being a Croat, suggesting that I didn't belong there. They said there were a lot of Serbs without work and that I belonged in Croatia.
At the moment I dwell here alone (at my friends'). My parents still cannot come because of the permission to cross the border. However, the main problem why they still remain there is that they wouldn't have a place to live here and they can hardly exchange their appartment there for an adequate one here.

I give this statement by myself without compulsion.

On April 28th 1992

* * *

Stjepan Ivšić, born on January 1st 1945 in Kukujevci, Croat, married, father of two sons, joiner by profession. Fled on April 11th 1992, now in Croatia, address: Peterlečki put No. 2 Vrapče-Zagreb. I make the following

STATEMENT

On the eve of New Year's Day my son refused to take part in the war against Croatia. After that I was being followed and threatened. My younger son got a draft notice and also refused, leaving for Zagreb, too. Soon afterwards, precisely on April 10th they wanted to beat me up or do me in, so I also had to leave Gibarac.

Zagreb, April 28th 1992

I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

/...

Branislav Krmek, Croat, born on July 4th 1968 in Srijemska Mitrovica, agricultural technician, single, fled Šid and came to Croatia on May 9th. I make the following

STATEMENT

My problems began already in the period of my studies in Novi Sad. In 1990 and 1991 there were various provocations and psychological presssure because of my Croat origin on the account that all Croats were Ustashas. The pressure continued to be exerted on my father and mother as well all because we were Croats, by singing Chetnik songs and shooting in front of the house, and various mistreatment, so I had to flee. I make this statement without compulsion.

* * *

Nedeljko Andrušić, born on November 6th 1955 in Golubinci, Croat, married, father of two children, shop assistant. Fled Golubinci on May 2nd 1992 (Inđijska Street No. 10), present address: Sesvetske Selnice, I. Lovinčića Street 1.
I make the following

STATEMENT

My problem began with the rise of Slobodan Milošević to power. I worked in a "Centrosprem" shop, where they provoked me by saying I was a member of the Croatian Democratic Union and finally that I was an Ustasha. According to them I had joined the Croatian national guard and Tuđman allegedly threw me out eventually. Then followed the mobilization and they said I was the one who spread propaganda around for people not to respond to calls. There were constant telephone threats. A policeman came to our shop and told me that for their Serbia fighters were needed and that I had two sons (everybody knew that) of the kind they exactly needed. Once they phoned us, my son Danijel answered, and they said "why don't you move away, Ustasha bastards, why don't you move away, are you wating for us to slaughter you all". They sent me on holiday telling me openly I wouldn't work there any more. I gave notice, because I knew I wouldn't be working there any more. After that I heard from my brothers I could exchange houses. So I came to Zagreb and exchanged houses.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Dr. Zvjezdana Nikolić, born on May 31st 1950 in Vareš, Croat, GP, unemployed at the moment, present address: Bosutska Street 39, Zagreb.
I make the following

STATEMENT

Because of the reign of terror, psychological pressure, violation of the basic human rights and rights of a mother, I had to leave Novi Banovci, municipality of Stara Pazova, Republic of Serbia.
Terror began with the day Serbian television showed a program comparing the present-day Croatian government to the government of the Independent State of Croatia in World War II. It all started with threats, also over the phone, that I ought to be slaughtered, raped.
It continued with mistreatment in front of my patients, by nurse Zlata Sljepčević and by the head of emergency service of the medical center in Stara pazova, Dr. Srećković, who took away my doctor's bag with ambulatory medicine. They had a scheme of imputing to me that I was collecting supplies (sheets, infusion systems) for the Republic of Croatia.
Permanently exposed to to physical and spiritual aggression by my husband Nenad Nikolić, with the same address in Novi Banovci, I tried to ask for the protection of the police and other authorities. To that effect I initiated a divorce procedure in January 1992.
The center for social work in Stara Pazova joined in, with their social worker Mirjana Sokolović, who put pressure on me, politically interrogated me, and was biased in favour of my husband (who declared himself as Serb), without taking into consideration the facts given by the mother, refusing to check on them. They kept postponing the decision of who our child was to live with, which prolonged the physical aggression by my husband. (The latest act of aggression was recorded by Dr. Ivetić in the surgery in Novi Banovci)
Consciously and on purpose they brought me as the mother to defend my motherhood, so because of all that I had to leave the Republic of Serbia. I assert that it is a matter of perfidious process of displacement of the non-Serb population from this region.
I know of a case, when the same social center took away a child from a Croat mother (the Sarić case), also a resident of Novi Banovci, municipality of Stara Pazova.

Zagreb, May 10th 1992

/...

Ivica Milošević, born on July 2nd 1965 in Gibarac, Croat, unemployed, worker by profession, single, fled Gibarac, municipality of Šid, on May 26th 1992, at the moment in Zagreb, Croatia, hotel "Central", Branimirova Street.
I make the following

STATEMENT

My problem began with the start of war. One evening, on my return from the shift, The Serbs from Gibarac caught me and beat me with a hand-grenade on the head, and also with their fists, and they wanted to slaughter me, when a Yugoslav Army officer showed up and saved us all. We had to sing Chetnik songs, to kneel and beg for our life since there were seven of them and they caught us one by one at a car-park and beat us. One of my mates was even cut so badly he barely survived. And after all that you had to keep quiet, you shouldn't even say who or what you were if you wanted to live. You had to respect theirs while nobody gave a damn about yours. They also set fire to parish priest's home. The atmosphere was getting more and more tense as days passed, so under pretence of going to Austria to work (I took a two-months unpaid vacation at "Lipa" company in Šid) I obtained a receipt to cross the border and I arrived via Budapest in Zagreb. I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, May 27th 1992

* * *

Ljubomir Kuraja, born on December 7th 1967 in Beška, municipality of Inđija, single, toolmaker by profession, works as a policeman in Croatia, now resident of Virovitica, Rusanova Street 146.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I am an officer of the Croatian police and when I got my vacation I used the occasion to go back home and visit my parents and friends. When I arrived there, the Serbian police took me to the police station for an informative conversation, during which I was exposed to mistreatment and harassment in order to confess to allegedly being an Ustasha and how many Serbs I slaughtered. As I didn't confess to any of that, they let me go home, but first they took away all my papers saying I would hear from them all right.
A few days after that members of the special police unit from Niš barged into my house arresting me and taking me to the police department in Ruma. I spent two days and a night in Ruma, during which they questioned me where I had been and what I had been doing. From Ruma they transferred me to the jailhouse in Srijemska Mitrovica, where I spent 185 days until P.O.W. exchange, so I was exchanged. How it was for me can be seen from the fact that I lost 13 kg, and even now I go from one hospital to another and take medicine.

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

/...

Nikola Livajušić, born on December 20th 1956 in Novi Sad, municipality of Novi Sad, married, father of two children, turner by profession, unemployed, fled Beška on December 20th 1991, now dwelling in Zagreb, Jagodinska Street I branching-off road No. 17.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I left Beška because of the pressure by the authorities in Serbia, because of the telephone threats and when I received a draft notice I fled and came to Zagreb to look for a house. I exchanged houses on December 20th 1991. I had been a private tradesman in Serbia for seven years. I payed all taxes and all my dues down to the last dinar and in return they wouldn't register my seven years of service, taking away my machines without any reason which I haven't gotten back yet. The people I exchanged houses with are now working with them, having obtained them with the help of authorities in Serbia. In February I sent down my wife to see if I could get them back legally, but they told her to go seek justice with Tuđman. The value of the machines is 100.000 DM.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, June 11th 1992

* * *

Milenko Rajić, born on August 30th 1958 in Gornji Vakuf, Bosnia-Herzegovina, worker, father of one child, unemployed, fled Beška on June 11th 1992, Croat. I make the following

STATEMENT

We fled Beška because they threatened us over the phone and in letters, that we had to move away otherwise they would kill us all. Two days later they threw two bombs into our yard. Every day Serbs from Croatia would come to our house to exchange houses threatening that it was better for us to go now and exchange houses, because later we would have to, since no Croat would remain in Voivodina.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion

In Zagreb, on June 26th 1992

(Seal of the UNION OF CROAT REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS FROM VOIVODINA)

Ivan Taški, born in Vašica on 7 July 1950; residence in Vašica, Bosutska 31; married, with one child; at present living in Zagreb, Borongajska b.b. I make the following

STATEMENT

I have suffered political terror ever since 1990, when my son married a woman from Croatia, the village of Bapska. I was told that my son was a Tuđman's man and that I was unwanted as such. The manager called me and ordered me to go on leave. I worked for 15 days, and was then forced to go on leave. After that harassment followed, they were trying to make me move from Vašice, but I continued working there. In 1992 they threw a bomb at my house. The following day they lifted my blinds, shouting: "Hey Ustasha, you're still there! Come here, let us slaughter you!" After that I asked for a permit to flee to Croatia and got it. I went to Zagreb with my wife.
I have made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, 28 May 1992

* * *

Frano Akrapović, born in Busovača on 4 October 1941, nationality: Croat; occupation: driver, mechanic; married, with two children; fled to Croatia on 17 June 1992, Jasmovačka 22, c/o Juraj Boltek.
I make the following

STATEMENT

On 15 June 1992 at 1 a.m five men tried to break into my flat. They were struck at the door. When we opened they said we were Ustashas and told us to get out of there. When we asked why, they immediately started beating us. They struck us all over with their feet, fists, and none of the neighbours came to help us. When it was over we simply ran away head over heels. I am making this statement still in a terrible shock.

/...

Ivica Paradžiković, nationality: Croat; born in Kukujevci, municipality of Šid, on 13 May 1965; residence: Kukujevci, Fruškogorska 60. At present in the Republic of Croatia, Babina Greda, Ive Đakovića 65.
I make the following

STATEMENT

My troubles began on 23 September 1991, when I was arrested by the reserve military police. They took me to Šid, detained me and beat me from 5 p.m. till 2 a.m. I got severe blows all over my body, they insulted me swearing my "Ustasha mother" and calling me a graduated Ustasha. On 24 September 1991 they took me to the prison in Sremska Mitrovica, 6th tract, but on the following day they took me to a village near Ruma, together with 80 or 90 other people. Most of them were from Tovarnik. There were three women among them (us), one of whom was Ljuba Budim, who had been physically maltreated (60 years old). In that village near Ruma we spent two days and one night, being physically and psychically mistreated all the time. Then they took us back to Sremska Mitrovica, 1st tract, where we stayed until 3 October 1991, when they took us to the newly opened detention camp of Begejci. At the beginning of my stay in the camp I was beaten every day by the corporal Borko, called soldier Voja. Every morning and every evening we sang "Hej Slaveni" (the former Yugoslav national anthem), after we had observed a minute of silence for those who had fallen in the war, before that saying aloud: "A minute of silence for the fallen JNA soldiers, officers and reservists and for all innocent people that we and vermin like us have killed." I was doing hard physical labour although I am disabled (I walk on crutches), which can be seen in hospital documents, at the same time being severely beaten and suffering serious injuries. Then they forced me to give false evidence against Mitar Bertić and Mirko Anđelković, both from Kukujevci (that they were the biggest Ustashas in the village, that they were buying weapons and stirring up a rebellion against the Serbian people). I had to sign a statement saying that I know that Petar Žiranović, nicknamed Hogar, Luka Gajdašić, nicknamed Gaša, Stjepan Gajčević, nicknamed Baja and another person whose name I can't remember, all of them from Kukujevci, are all ZNG soldiers (Croatian army). They forced me to beat civilians - Croats - with a stick, and I had to do it. I was in that infamous camp from 23 September 1991 to 11 December 1991.
I was then exchanged in Bosanski Šamac and transported to Zagreb, to "Dr. Fran Mihaljević" hospital, Zvijezda. I was under treatment there for about 37 days.
My statement can be verified by Nikola Krizmanović from Lovas, Eugen Nađ from Petrovci, Željko Prokop from Šid, Anđelko Papak from Ilok and many others.
I have made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Babina Greda, 20 April 1992

Statement written down by:	Statement made by:
Jasna Bičanić	Ivan Paradžiković

Witnesses: Slavko Jermić, Željka Jermić and Milan Bičanić.

/...

Dražen Bartolović, born on August 1st 1970 in Vukovar, Croat, resident of Bač, Maršal Tito Square 9, miller by profession. At the moment I am staying in Zagreb at my friends' in Kranjčevićeva 1b.
I make the following

STATEMENT

On March 23rd 1992 I received a Yugoslav Army draft notice - we were to go to Slavonia. As far as I know, we were supposed to go to Bobota and Ernestinovo. Although they said we would remain on the Bačka side, I didn't believe them and so I left for Croatia via Bosnia. I also found out that from the municipality of Bač 650 men were to be drafted in the following composition: around 300 Croats, 150-160 Slovaks, 40 Hungarians an the rest Serbs. At the same time in Bač and its surroundings (Plavna, Vajska) pressure is exerted on the natives. On March 3rd fire was set to hay-barns and I myself was submitted to annoyance such as search of my car by the Serbian volunteers. They also physically mistreated a couple of Croats.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

* * *

Mihajlo Samardžija, born on September 23rd 1960 in Novi Slankamen, lived so far in Novi Slankamen, Ciglanska Street 3a. Present dwelling: Novi Zagreb, Klara, Franje Malnara VIII branching-off road No.1, toolmaker by profession, married, have two children. I make the following

STATEMENT

On August 23rd 1991 I received a draft notice demanding of me to report to the "Bajić Paja" barracks in Novi Sad, allegedly to return my military gear, since I was a driver and they needed drivers, but we knew it was the center where they rallied people for the front. I knew I was to drive a vehicle to the front. That evening I quickly prepared with my family and in the morning we took the bus and departed for Croatia leaving two houses which I later managed to exchange. I make this statement without compulsion.

Zagreb, March 31st 1992

/...

Stevan Žagar, born on July 7th 1954 in Novi Sad, Croat, married, father of two children. I make the following

STATEMENT

I lived in Novi Sad, Šangaj settlement. In the time prior to the outbreak of war my daughter Zvezdana Žagar was in Split, where she attended school and went in for swimming at the swimming club "Mornar". There she was supposed to stay, but since traffic and other connections were severed, she couldn't go back to her club, where she would even now be gladly received. As I was sitting in the local bar, in the settlement where I lived during the war, I was attacked for having "delivered my child over to the Ustashas and Tuđman", they said that Croat were cowards etc. I replied to all those insults and in the end physically squared accounts with one of present. But other two began to defend him and all three of them attacked me. The police came breaking up the fight, at which occasion I was hit in my right eye. After that they took me twice to the police station. At the court what I said and how I defended myself wasn't taken into account, only what they said. I was sentenced to ten days imprisonment. Before that I had never been sentenced in my life. I did my time in the Novi Sad prison, where I was verbally insulted upon arrival. During all that time they kept cutting tyres on my car, called me on the phone, and I was isolated on my job and in the settlement.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

* * *

Miroslav Tomić, born on August 29th in Tuebingen, FRG, Croat, car-mechanic by profession.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I was living in Gibarac ever since I was born. I worked at a private cafe in Gibarac, where I came into contact with Serbian reservists and Chetniks who came to our village in September 1991. Working in the cafe I was daily exposed to provocations listening to their Chetnik songs and threats: "All of you (Croats) ought to be killed", "You are not people", "All Croats are Ustashas", "Slaughterers" etc. I came into a physical contact with a reservist from Kraljevo nicknamed "Tajson" who noticed a sticker of the Croatian football club HAJDUK at the bar and would force me to take it off. I didn't agree to that and if it wasn't for a reservist with a little presence of mind, I don't know how it would have ended. In May 1991 I was searched twice by the members of the Serbian special police units in Kukujevci. Once it happened in the "Galeb" cafe and once at the road entrance to Kukujevci, where the members of the special police unit lay a gun in my car and mistreated me for half an hour to finally let me go with an explanation that they were only jokin. Also, my brother's cafe where I worked was demolished by the Serbian volunteers and Chetniks.
Making phone calls to Zagreb during the war I was often connected to the police in Šid, so I believe that the phone was tapped. All this contributed to my decision to leave my house in Gibarac and come to Zagreb. I am a member of the Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina since April 1991.
I make this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

/...

Željko Lukač, born in Gradište, municipality of Županja, Croatia, on 15 July 1964; nationality: Croat; occupation: worker; single.
I make the following

STATEMENT

I lived in Gibarac with my father and mother until the first war events, when I moved to my brother's place in the same village. He had to move to Germany because he and his family were members of DSHV (Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina). The first provocations in the village, such as curfew and swearing the Ustasha mother (who should all be slaughtered, according to them) coincided with the arrival of Serbian volunteers (Chetniks) in September 1991. When they left, one day in the evening five or six chetniks, armed with pistols, sawed-off guns, knives and bombs, came to the village inn and demolished it with weapons and blows. It wasn't enough for them but they also beat up Ivica Milašević and Tomislav Adamović and stabbed Zvonko Markanović several times with a knife and, thinking he was dead, threw him out behind the inn into the old scales. Later on it was found out that those people were brothers Zoran and Željko Stoparić from Šid. This case was labelled an accident with minor bodily injuries suffered.
After that other leaders unlawfully moved people into empty houses and into the houses where only one person lived (like mine) and posted guards, who didn't let people in. They also threatened with guns and searched. One night the parish office was set on fire, and the majority of documents burnt down, the only bar in the village, too.
At work Vladica Rajić directly threatened my with a gun, saying that we were all Ustashas, that she would kill us all and that we don't belong to Serbia. In Šid I had to hide that I am from Gibarac because the majority of its inhabitants are Croats. I also got a threatening letter saying that I must move out or someone ? will make me move out. I couldn't stand all this any more. I also got dismissed from my job without an explanation.
I have made this statement of my own free will and without compulsion.

Zagreb, 16 September 1992

* * *

I, Miroslav Kraljević, born on January 26th in Sot, municipality of Šid-Voivodina, jurist by profession, with previous dwelling in Šid, B. Kidrič Street No.17/I, employed at the oil factory in Šid, state that I was physically mistreated from the July of 1991, when I was assaulted in the street in the center of Šid by Nova Bešević, later one of the most notorious followers of the Chetnik leader Šešelj in Šid. My "guilt" was in that I was a Croat, married to a Croat wife from Ilok, whose brother was had just been wounded as a Croatian policeman by the Yugoslav Army on the bridge between Ilok and Bačka Palanka. The news of it spread around in Šid, of course, and from that time on my problems began, because I automatically became a "Tuđman's man", a Croatian-Democratic-Union man etc. After I was beaten up in the street, the authorities in Šid didn't react at all, on the contrary, psychological mistreatment followed, telephone threats, but I wasn't physically mistreated any more.

/...

TOMISLAV NIKOLIĆ
born on July 5th 1963
in Sombor

Matije Gupca Street 302
56258 Posavski Podgajci

STATEMENT

My name is Tomislav Nikolić, my mother's name is Vera, I was born on July 5th 1963 in Sombor. I dwelled in Vase Stajića Street 3, in a house I owned, which I can prove.
On August 3rd 1992 we had to shift for ourselves and so we came to a temporary residence at my wives parents' in Matije Gupca Street 302 in Posavski Podgajci, a place near Županja. We left our house to the care of my mother, Vera ŽIVANOVIĆ, who lives in Sombor, Prvomajski boulevard A22/11, which we can also prove. At the beginning of October we received a letter from my mother telling me that some Niko Pejić, a refugee from Županja, had broken into my house under pretext that we agreed on exchange of houses and that me and my family lived in his house in Županja. This was not true and I proved it by documents I sent to my mother, and she sent it to the man. In the meantime my mother called the police to evict Pejić, but they wouldn't intervene although Pejić didn't have any written document on the exchange of houses, but only asserted it to be as he said. My mother went to the police chief, but he fenced himself off telling her that the police has no business dealing with squatters. Besides, Pejić carries an unregistered pistol threatening my mother with it and forbidding her to enter the house in which more than half of the things belong to her. He sends messages to me to beware of him because of my alleged breaking into his house and he openly threatens me in front of the neighbourhood.
Under full moral and material responsibility I can make the following statement: "I do not dwell in the house of Niko Pejić in Županja and I have never exchanged houses with anyone, especially not with Pejić!"

Zagreb, November 10th 1992

* * *

In Golubinci in Nikola Tesla Street No.21 there lived Roža Žafran, born on August 24th 1935 in Smoljanovac, with her son Ante Žafran, born on July 18th 1959 in Golubinci. They lived in a new single-story house, completely finished and furnished. Exchanges of houses began, so two men from Zagreb came to them, too. They liked Žafrans' house well and they demanded of Ante to exchange houses with them saying that both houses were of approximately same value. The Žafrans declined the possibility because they wanted to see the other house first, and so they said they weren't ready for the journey and that they should wait a little. The men from Zagreb, more precisely Uroš Grab and his cousins took Ante by force to the municipal court in Stara Pazova and forced him at gunpoint to sign the contract for a house he never even saw. When he came to Zagreb he saw a house that was in no way even close to the house he left in Golubinci. The house is unfinished and not in a condition to live in. Is this the way stories of the people who have to move away should end, in this manner?

Zagreb, October 2nd 1992

/...

Ante Gotovac, son of Jozo, born on March 20th 1951 in Bušnja Ravan, Croat, now resident of Zagreb, Česmina Street 26. Identity card No. 9401700, Zagreb, registration number 2003951330163.
I make the following

STATEMENT

My name is Ante Gotovac, son of Jozo, born on March 20th 1951 in Budišnja Ravan. I lived in Beška, Dunavska Street No. 73, but since I fled from Beška I now am in Zagreb at the following address: Česmina Street 26. I am waiter by profession, mobilized to he "Borongaj" barracks. The following event took place in Beška on December 28th 1991. At 9,30 a.m. three policemen armed with machine guns came, their commander was Mladen Repić who went into my house together with one of the policemen, while the the third one remained outside. They demanded to see my pistol for which I had all the papers. They asked me if I had any other piece of arms, to which I replied no, except for my brother-in-law's air-gun. Then they told me to come to the police station in Beška at 11,30 a.m., together with my brother-in-law Ivan Mesaroš, for an informative conversation. When I came to the police station, I took a seat and interrogation began. First he asked me if Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina was active there. I answered it wasn't because the president of the party and all its members went to Croatia. Then he accused Mate Jurić, who left Beška a long time ago, and me for making lists of the Serbs to be liquidated, and said that I was the the main organizer of exchange of houses and that I went to Zagreb. However, I was neither making any lists whatsoever nor leave Beška. Then Mladen Repić stood up saying he would break all my bones and he slapped me that I almost fell from the chair. At that I turned my other cheek telling him he could hit me again, but I still wasn't guilty. Then Kostić came up to me, slapped me five times and took away the chair from under me so I fell on the floor. I stood up because he told me an Ustasha must stand in attention and that he knew what ideals me and my family fought for. I visited the municipal police department in Inđija as well as the provincial police department in Novi Sad, but in spite of promisses to consider my case and let me know I never got the answer. Besides, they threatened me over the phone that I had to emigrate because they would set fire to my house and slaughter my family. On Febreuary 29th 1992 I left Beška. I went to Croatia and haven't gone back any more.

Zagreb, November 25th 1992

/...

Vlada Kostić, born in Beška, Inđija, on 17 October 1960, lived in Petrovaradin from where he has been expelled, now living in Zagreb, Poljane 42, Dubrava; occupation: locksmith, at present working in Ivanja Rijeka.
I make the following

STATEMENT

on the events in Sremska Rača.
I was travelling to Croatia with Zlatko Svetić, to live there. We were stopped by a military patrol near Sremska Rača. They drove us out of the car without a word, searched us and the car, and seized 7,900 DM and 400 DM from Zlatko Svetić. They went on searching and as soon as they found our DSVH membership cards (Democratic Union of Croats in Voivodina) they surrounded us and started to harass us physically and psychically, which lasted until 7 o'clock. Then they took us to Sremska Mitrovica, where they went on harassing us, saying that we were Ustashas and that we should all be killed. All that lasted until 3 p.m. We were handed over to the police department in Novi Sad. They didn't harass us there, but nobody spoke about giving us back the money.
I hereby confirm that the above statement is true and was given without compulsion.

Zagreb, 9 November 1992

Ivan Rac, son of Dragan, born on November 21st 1963 in Subotište, municipality of Pećinci, Croat. Dwelling: L/3, 1/6 Ruma 22400, temporarily accommodated in Zagreb, Sports Hall "Martinovka", Miramarska bb. I make the following

STATEMENT

I fled Ruma on June 25th 1992. I remember when I was a child we already had problems living in my birthplace, all because we were Croats. The man who lived next to us used to fire his pistol and threaten my father saying he would kill all the Croats, that they had to emigrate from their Serbia. This went on for some time and became unbearable because he had support even from the police, so that my father had to sell our house and we had to move away from that place and go to Ruma to a private appartment. Life was very hard, my father was unemployed, my mother also, whereas my brother and I went to school. After 3-4 years of such hardships my father got a job at Rumatrans and after 7-8 more years he was given an appartment by his firm. My father was killed incidentally in 1987. My mother inherited another appartment, so the appartment that was registered in my father's name was left to me, and I lived in it until the day I had to run away. It had all started before this war began, since they loathed every Croat for reasons known only to them. Intolerance began, pesecution, mistreatment, threats and attacks against private property, which all happened to me. Twice they broke windows on my appartment, and after I reported it to the authorities I was told they couldn't protect me and that such time had come when they could do nothing. Day in, day out I was threatened over the phone that I had to emigrate from Serbia, because as they said "darkness would eat me". As I was coming out of my appartment they would all look at me as if had done them wrong, which psychologically drove me out of my mind. I was taken to the police station quite a number of times, always for "an informative conversation", although they had no reason to do that. They would always interrogate me, what I was doing, where I was going, with whom. They would ask me why I didn't go to Croatia, since many Croats had already emograted from Serbia. Life in the town where I lived became unbearable, so I had to leave, because I didn't know whatever awaited me there and what more I would have suffered had I stayed.

I hereby confirm that this statement was made without any compulsion.

Zagreb, December 11th 1992

/...

We lived for a year and a half at the house of a Croat who had lived somewhere in Vukovar but he disappeared after it was seized. There were rumours that he was in a detention camp somewhere and that he later on fled to Germany, and that's when all troubles began. People we didn't know who wanted to exchange the house were coming up, trying to cheat us in different ways in order to get the house. We resisted as long as we could, but one day they came up with a truck full of things and required us to get out of the house. We didn't want to because we didn't have any proof of the exchange of the house. The police didn't turn up until four and a half hours later, so that we didn't have any protection because there was a large number of them. Since 15 August when it happened we have been living at my Uncle's, but we heard from the neighbours that they are threatening, which we can't stand. Of all those people we knew only Željo Sušić and his family.

Zagreb, 22 November 1992

Anđelka Piplica

UNION OF CROATIAN REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS
FROM VOIVODINA
ZAGREB
Prosinačkih žrtava 49.

Sisak, December 22,1993

S T A T E M E N T

Further to the Contract signed under pressure and a fraud related to an exchange of properties between Mr. Franja Nilić, son of Nikola, of Hrtkovci, M. Tita 27, and Mr. Mile Nožinić of Sisak, A. Cesarca 101 (Contract No.3075-92 attached), falsely claimed by the Second Party as ownership whereas it is actually the right of occupancy, but the legal counsel recognized it, it is clear that the fraud had been premeditated and planned long time ago, because Mr. Nožinić had left his apartment as early as August 19,1991, taking along all of his belongings and leaving the place vacant, while almost a year afterwards (on June 23,1992) he exchanged it together with all movables (statement by the tenants' committee dtd. July 25,1992). Even if we forget about, say, use of force, what remains is an exchange of the right to use the apartment (stated in the contract) which the Party lost due to the force of law (as he did not use the apartment continuously - did not live in it) (data under ref. 90-0-1-DT/GD). The owner, "STAN" Joint Stock Co., instituted legal proceedings which resulted in the ruling denying the tenancy rights - right of occupancy (indicated in the Contract) to Mr. Mile Nožinić.
Following the said "exchange" I had to run away from Hrtkovci where I was ruined down completely, brought to the brink of subsistence and reduced to poverty.

Here is a list of my movable and immovable property:

A) - house, newly built in 1989, net floor area 120 sq.m, plus loft 110 sq.m
- old part of the house, 73 sq.m (larder 15 sq.m, basement 8 sq.m, corridor 8 sq.m, kitchenette 6 sq.m, stable 36 sq.m), plus loft 70 sq.m
- outkitchen, 12 sq.m
- old corn crib, 4x2x2=16 cu.m
- old shed, 20 sq.m
- cart shed, 3x4 m
- smokehouse, new 1.5x1.5x2.5 m
- chicken-house, 3x4 m
- cowshed, 4.5x3m
- new corn crib, 6x2x2=24 cu.m
- pigsty with shed, 6x5= 30 sq.m
- hay-barn, 12x6x3=216 cu.m
- ancillary shed 3x2=6 sq.m
- latrine

B) land (as per Contract)
- lot No. 1596, with a house, farm-yard and tilled field in the village 15 ares and 41 sq.m
- lot No. 1597, tilled field in the village, 23 ares and 76 sq.m

/...

- lot No. 3835, newly cleared field, 56 ares and 47 sq.m
- lot No. 4017, field 1 hectar, 65 ares and 84 sq.m

C) - orchard, with some 50 plum-trees bearing fruit
- 6 nut-trees, 30 cm dia, bearing fruit
- grove, with 45 locust-trees, 16 - 17 cm dia
- 2 mulberry trees, 50 cm dia.

Attachments : 1x documents related to Contract
1x list of property in the house
1x supplementary list of property in the house
1x drawing of Hrtkovci
1x details of house

Statement given by

Franja Nilić, signed
Maršala Tita 27
22427 HRTKOVCI
ID card No. 27163/79, Ruma Police Office

Place of abode (with the son)
Kneza Branimira 12
44103 SISAK
tel. (044) 30-616

UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/262
13 July 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC/ENGLISH

Forty-eighth session
Item 115 of the preliminary list*

HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Letter dated 12 July 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to send you herewith the statement made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince El-Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan before the Second World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna, on 14 June 1993 (see annex for summary and full text). His Royal Highness addressed the meeting as one of the eight eminent persons invited as personal guests of the Secretary-General to the Conference, as well as on behalf of Jordan.

I should highly appreciate it if you would kindly have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 115 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Adnan S. ABU ODEH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/48/50.

ANNEX

Summary of the statement made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince El-Hassan Bin Talal of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the World Conference on Human Rights at Vienna, on 14 June 1993

I. Introduction

It is our duty to ensure that this meeting inspires an active commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms. Our political and economic differences have sometimes caused us to find consensus elusive, but the task of consensus-building is critical in these times of transition. As a first step, we must re-confirm two basic principles: the universality of human rights, and the indivisibility of all rights.

II. Universality

Human rights are universal in that they are possessed by all members of the human family; these rights form a core minimum standard binding on all states. However, the values of each society may shape the policies and measures which a states adopts in order to implement its international obligations. Regional human rights instruments can play an important role here by complementing and strengthening global norms.

III. Monitoring

International monitoring of human rights touches on the sensitive issue of state sovereignty. Sovereignty does not give license to brutalise, to disempower, to deny human dignity. The monitoring of human rights should thus be seen to be objective: for selective condemnation serves only to perpetuate conflict; and to hamper potential reconciliation.

IV. Indivisibility

We need to adopt a holistic approach which can embrace the inter-dependence of all human beings and the indivisibility of all rights. This means protecting and respecting not only civil and political rights, but also the economic, social and cultural rights that are their practical foundations. We must commit ourselves to strengthening the implementation of these rights.

V. Conclusion

Public awareness programmes, backed up internationally by the ratification of treaties and the commitment of resources, are desperately needed; but these alone are insufficient. Something more profound is required: a shift in our thinking, so that humanity, rather than economic considerations, can be central to the goals of governments and of individuals. We must move on from the "sound bite" mentality and the slogans of our media age to a global ethic of responsibility and caring - to a new code of human conduct. Let us build here a new vision based on mutual respect, tolerance and compassion, so that the outcome of this Conference will do justice to our common humanity.

/..

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
CROWN PRINCE EL-HASSAN BIN TALAL
OF THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Address to

THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Vienna, Austria
14 June 1993

We have gathered at the World Conference on Human Rights to strengthen our individual and collective efforts to ensure respect for the human rights and dignity of every child, woman and man. In this task we represent those who are not here with us, those millions who are tortured by starvation, or imprisoned behind the bars of prejudice and discrimination, and those facing death, physical abuse or incarceration for their beliefs. We speak here, Ladies and Gentlemen, not only for ourselves, but also for the voiceless still denied their right to self-determination, or those suffering the abuse of prolonged foreign occupation. We seek to act on behalf of the one quarter of our human family forced to live in poverty and deprivation, as well as of the dispossessed and those forced to flee their homelands, seeking refuge and international protection; yet all too often finding asylum a mirage beyond their reach. We speak here also for those yet to come: We are responsible for the future that awaits our children and humanity as a whole. Abuses of human rights offend the dignity not only of the victims, but of us all. We are all members of one family - humanity - sharing our one Earth in common. At great cost we have learned the importance of caring for the Earth. We must also learn to care for those who live upon it.

It is our duty to ensure that this meeting goes beyond mere rhetoric and inspires an active commitment to universal human rights and fundamental freedoms. The differences in our political ideologies and in the economic models we have adopted have sometimes impeded consensus amongst us. But we are not here to talk about politics - we are here to talk about anthro-politics, politics for people - but about rights; not about economic theories, but about justice and equitable access to available resources.

In this, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have the benefit of the diversity of our faiths and cultures which will act as a rich resource in our search for a consensus based on our common humanity. President Mary Robinson of Ireland has recently called for a listening approach to human rights. We must heed her words here in our deliberations and listen to each other and be respectful of each other's points of view, mindful that in our various traditions the approaches we adopt in the process of consensus building might themselves differ.

This task of consensus building is critical. In these transitional post-Cold-War times, we need a joint commitment to meet the challenges of an emerging world order. Human rights represent a touchstone, a yardstick by which the success of our endeavours can be judged. Our aim should not be simply to reach a compromise between differing or conflicting views; but to find a common vision, a framework for global action, a consensus for the future of humankind.

As a first step we need to re-confirm those fundamental principles on which human rights are based - the universality of human rights and the indivisibility of all rights. From this base we can develop a truly global ethic for regulating, not only the relationship between states and their peoples, but also the manner in which individuals and communities treat one another.

A global consensus on human rights must affirm their universality. Human rights are universal in that they are possessed by all members of the human family, regardless of differences of gender, race, religion, politics, or any other distinguishing characteristic. These rights form a core minimum standard binding on all states.

Some recent criticisms of the principle of universality of human rights provided the impetus for a satellite meeting in preparation for this Conference which was held in Jordan in April 1993 under the auspices of the International Movement of Rights and Humanity. This discussion brought together representatives of the world's main faiths, and people from all regions of the world. A consensus emerged from the meeting calling for the re-affirmation of the vital importance of the principle of universality, by which all states must respect and protect the internationally recognised human rights, whatever the level of the states' economic or political development. We should take the opportunity of this World Conference to re-confirm this vital principle.

However, as our brother Assistant Secretary General Ibrahima Fall reminded us in the Amman meeting, international "standards provide great flexibility in national adaptation

and do not impose any specific political, legal, social or cultural model". Thus the values, Ladies and Gentlemen, of each society may shape the policies and measures which a state adopts in order to implement its international obligations.

It is in this context that Jordan envisages regional human rights instruments playing an important role. May I here pay special tribute to the African Charter, which in it carries many precedents. They can complement and strengthen the global norms, by developing additional rules and norms for the implementation of human rights in the region. It is our hope that the World Conference will provide an impetus for the adoption of a regional human rights charter in our part of the world, drawing on the richness of our philosophies and the values of our faiths and cultures. Similarly, the contributions of different approaches may strengthen the drafting of future global instruments.

International monitoring of the established standards touches Ladies and Gentlemen on the sensitive issue of the nature of state sovereignty. But we must never lose sight of the fact that sovereignty does not give licence to brutalise, to disempower, to deny human dignity. There is no sovereign right to torture and maim, or to condemn individuals or whole peoples to poverty through the abuse and manipulation of political or economic power.

Human rights issues are the legitimate concern of the international community under the U.N. Charter. All states therefore have a responsibility - and indeed an interest - to promote universal respect for human rights. But if human rights criteria are to be the foundation of justice in the world, their monitoring should be seen to be objective. Accountability must be based on internationally recognised legal norms, and not on a particular state's subjective value judgement. For selective condemnation serves only to perpetuate conflict and hamper potential reconciliation.

We have a unique opportunity at this Conference to re-confirm the indivisibility of all rights and to commit ourselves to strengthening the implementation not only of civil and political rights but also of economic, social and cultural rights. It was President Leopold Senghor who reminded us that "human rights begin with breakfast", yet starvation is widespread. We are witness to the growing number of our children forced to eke out a precarious existence on city streets; the suffering of people evicted from their homes to swell the homelessness that shames our societies; the indigenous peoples of our world denied their cultural heritage; and the growing impoverishment of women, children and other vulnerable groups. Our indifference and failure to take strong and

effective action to prevent and address these violations, is in my view itself a form of abuse - one for which we all share responsibility.

As far as cultural rights are concerned, I trust that the rich culture of this beautiful city of Vienna, Foreign Minister Mock, host to our Conference, will inspire us to give special emphasis to developing the protection and implementation of these rights, and to strengthen the relationship of cultural rights to human development and democracy. A society which prevents free cultural expression or excludes participation in cultural life by any part of its people is an impoverished society, and one that is unlikely to practice tolerance and other attitudes fundamental to human rights.

Since the 1968 World Conference in Tehran, we have done much to identify the issues of concern. Considerable progress has been made in strengthening the protection of human rights by the adoption of specific international legal instruments. Our task at this Conference is surely to consider how to bridge the divide between the aspirations of these legal texts, and the realities of people's lives. For despite our achievements, many categories of human rights violations have yet to be eliminated.

We need to move on from the mere reiteration of human wrongs to promoting human rights - right relationship between states and their peoples, and mutual respect among individuals. This requires, as some of our colleagues in the N.G.O.s have reminded us, a pro-active approach focused on effective strategies for the prevention of violations, including the promotion of a human rights framework for policy-making, education in human rights and responsibilities, and the empowerment of individuals and peoples so that they live in dignity, protected by their rights.

We need to adopt a holistic approach which can embrace the interdependence of all human beings and the indivisibility of all human rights; and which can address social inequalities and environmental concerns, both national and international, in the idiom of human rights. This means protecting and respecting not only civil and political rights, but also the economic, social and cultural rights that are their practical foundations.

We need more public awareness programmes, backed up at the international level by the ratification of treaties and the commitment of resources. But is this sufficient? It seems that we need something more profound - a shift in our thinking so that humanity, rather than economic considerations, can be central to our goals both as governments and as individuals.

Such an ethic is essential if we wish to deal effectively with the myriad of new challenges facing us. We need think only of the increasingly apparent human dimensions of the environmental crisis; the sore testing of our compassion and humanity by the widening AIDS pandemic; the growing technological and economic divide between North and South; or the difficulties of containing religious intolerance which threatens the mutual understanding so critically needed in our increasingly multi-racial and multi-cultural societies.

The human spirit is under siege, our instinct of neighbourly love threatened by the onslaught of hatred, intolerance, greed and cynicism, and may I add to those in the hall, with all due respect, apathy. The world cries out for inspiration, but is floundering in its search for guidance, for a way forward.

Can human rights values provide that light to guide us? Can the candle of hope rekindle our human solidarity and love? Can we build a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity which shapes not only international action, and that of governments, but also our own actions as individuals? How can we move beyond the paucity of spirit caused by excessive materialism?

In the words of the Arab poet Al-Mutanabi:

> "he who squanders his days collecting money,
> for fear of poverty,
> poverty is what he has attained."

This view has been echoed recently by Nobel Peace Laureate and prisoner of conscience Aung San Suu Kyi who writes "material yardsticks alone cannot serve as an adequate measure of human well-being". She reminds us that "even as basic an issue as poverty has to be re-examined to take into account the psychological sense of deprivation that makes people feel poor". She warns us that a "narrowly focused materialism that seeks to block out all considerations apparently irrelevant to one's own well-being tends finally to block out what is in fact most relevant".

Ladies and Gentlemen, considerations of this sort were behind the shift in U.N.D.P.'s approach from measuring development solely in terms of G.N.P. towards including other criteria to measure not just economic, but human development. We need to move on from the "sound bite" mentality and slogans of our media age to deeper reflection, and replace the "ethic" of success and materialism with an ethic of responsibility and care.

The potential for such a global ethic is inherent in our common humanity and the values shared by our faiths - the avoidance of harm to others, compassion and neighbourly love. Together with the values on which human rights are based - recognition of equal human dignity and worth, mutual respect, tolerance and justice - we have firm foundations for that ethic based on an inclusive approach, one which brings women and men into equal partnership and listens to the voices of the young and others too frequently ignored.

We need a new vision - a vision which is grounded in humility, in modesty, in self-criticism; a vision for a better world based on mutual respect, tolerance, compassion and human solidarity. We need to build a code of human conduct which informs professional inter-personal relationships and calls upon governors and governments alike to place respect for human rights and humanitarian principles at the very centre of their policies and actions.

A strong global ethic to shore up political will is essential to ensure prompt action by the international community in response to murder, rape and other atrocities or ethnic genocide, and to ensure that the perpetrators are brought to justice. We need, Ladies and Gentlemen, to promote greater international solidarity based on shared humanity acting as a common bond between all peoples.

In promoting such an ethic I have in mind that it is not just governments that have the responsibility to respect human rights and dignity, but individuals as well, whether in political positions, professional life, or acting as private citizens. Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights reminds us of this common responsibility the words "all human beings ..... should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".

It is in this spirit that I proposed to the General Assembly over a decade ago the promotion of a "new International Humanitarian Order". Since then, Secretary General, Jordan has supported a number of resolutions in that context, the most recent being resolution 47/106 adopted last December which calls upon the Secretary-General to report on the progress made to the Assembly next year. The end of the Cold War offers an exciting opportunity within the international community to review relationships between peoples and nations, and to identify common ethical values upon which to build our common future.

It is important, Ladies and Gentlemen, that "the New World Order" everybody is now talking about is essentially humanitarian in content and in intent. In the final analysis, it is humanitarian problems, affecting the lives of millions of our fellow human beings, which are the products of violations of human rights as well as the ultimate challenge to supporters of those rights. The growing number of increasingly complex humanitarian issues is a tragic comment on our times. It is therefore not surprising that, during the preparatory meetings prior to this conference, a number of governments highlighted the nexus between human rights and humanitarian issues. It is incumbent upon us, individually and collectively, to build human solidarity in favour of human rights and freedoms.

Recently, Sir Yehudi Menuhin suggested the creation of a "European Parliament of Cultures". Well, how about a Peoples' Parliament - a flexible approach to participation. Certainly something along these lines is needed.

We must support and join in partnership with the N.G.O.s, the individual human rights advocates, and the peoples' movements throughout the world, which nurture and enact this solidarity. It is through these groups that the opening phrase of the U.N. Charter "We the Peoples ....." is given credibility and life.

Let us build, Ladies and Gentlemen, on our common purpose here, so that the final outcome of this Conference will do justice to the humanity which we all share. We can, we must, we will be inspired by this Conference to commit ourselves to building a truly global ethic of respect for human rights and dignity.

Thank you.

UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/48/263
S/26078
13 July 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-eighth session
Items 34, 35, 85, and 86
of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY
FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES IN THE NEAR EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES AFFECTING
THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE
AND OTHER ARABS OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 13 July 1993 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Following up on my letter, dated 6 July 1993 (A/48/253-S/26045), concerning the report by the human rights group Middle East Watch, which affirmed that the Israeli army, through the use of undercover units, is pursuing a policy of summary executions of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, I should like to bring to your attention the findings of Amnesty International in its 1993 annual report on human rights. Amnesty International reported that, among the many human rights violations committed by Israel, "at least 120 Palestinians were shot dead by Israeli forces, often in circumstances suggesting extrajudicial executions or other unjustifiable killings". The figure of 120 for the total amount of those killed by undercover units represents one of the more conservative tallies prepared by human rights organizations. Some groups, such as Al-Haq and Palestine Human Rights Campaign (PHRC), have arrived at figures as high as 160 killings, with many of the victims 16 years of age or younger.

This pattern of undercover killings of Palestinians has, according to Middle East Watch, also been accompanied by the use of a new tactic against "wanted" Palestinian activists, namely that of "sealing off and emptying neighbourhoods in which suspects are thought to be hiding and, if they fail to come out and surrender, attacking the suspected hideout from a distance, using

* A/48/50.

rockets, launched grenades, machine guns and other heavy artillery". Such actions have caused the destruction and damage of over 100 homes and have left hundreds of Palestinians homeless.

Amnesty International's report details several other human rights violations committed by Israel against the Palestinians, which include the systematic torture and ill-treatment of Palestinians under interrogation, the detention of Palestinians without charge or trial and the deportation of Palestinians from the occupied territory. According to the report, "Palestinian detainees continued to be systematically tortured or ill-treated mostly during interrogation. Methods included beatings, hooding with dirty sacks, sleep deprivation, and confinement in small dark cells known as 'closets' or, when cold, 'refrigerators'". It has been reported that three Palestinians died in detention, and a fourth Palestinian died shortly after interrogation. Additionally, with regard to the Israeli practice of deportation, Amnesty International called for the immediate return of the Palestinian deported to southern Lebanon in December 1992.

Israel's widespread policies and practices of continued repression, administrative detention, torture, killing, home demolition and deportation are all gross violations of international law and of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949, which applies to all of the Palestinian territory occupied by Israel in 1967, including Jerusalem. We, therefore, once again reiterate our call for the Security Council to carry out the required measures to bring a halt to these violations and illegal activities and to provide international protection for the Palestinian people living under occupation, in accordance with Security Council resolution 681 (1990) and as expressed in the report of the Secretary-General of 25 January 1993 to the Security Council.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 34, 35, 85 and 86 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations